ENTERTAINMENT / N1
Pinay Marie-France Arcilla a hit in off-broadway show

BUSINESS / B1
Aboitiz wins bidding for Magat power plant in Isabela with $530-M offer

METRO / A25
UP Board of Regents to decide on tuition increase today

SPORTS / A23
Reigning champ Catalan wins wushu's -52 kg gold medal, RP's 4th in the 15th Asian Games

Tipon to use Asian Games bonus to build dream home

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—WHEN HE RECEIVES HIS P1.5-million bonus incentive, boxing gold medalist Jean Tipon intends to deposit the money in a bank, then use it to build a house for his family of four.

"This is for all my and Peng Jethay (I don't have a house yet)," said the soft-spoken former's son

SPORTS A23

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, December 15, 2006 ★★ 17 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 7 P18 inquirer.net

Manny gives ma 'old' car plus driver and guard

By Aquiles Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao

GENERAL SANTOS City—When Filipino boxing idol Manny Pacquiao's bank account became richer after he floored Mexican Erik Morales Nov. 19

MANNY A23

Pols barred on rally stage

Organizers say Brothers Mike, Eddie also banned from grandstand

By Christine V. Esguerra

ORGANIZERS OF THE PRAYER RALLY AGAINST Charter change announced yesterday politicians would not be allowed on the Quirino Grandstand along with Bro. Mike Velarde of El Shaddai and Bro. Eddie Villanueva of Jesus Is Lord Movement.

"Participants should just carry the rosary," said Henrietta de Villa, former ambassador to the Vatican and chief organizer of the event. She said that placards, banners and streamers should be left on Taft Avenue—well out of sight of the anticipated huge gathering rallied by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

De Villa said the stage would be exclusively limited to prelates and priests who will concelebrate a Mass. She said the strict protocol was meant to keep the occasion devoid of any political color.

"No politicians will be allowed on stage, none at all," she told the Inquirer yesterday in a phone interview. She said they since the CBCP had sent an invitation to specific persons or groups, the event was open to anyone believing in the call to "watch and pray" for recent political events in the country.

The other day, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon and his Metro Manila police chief Director Reynaldo Varilla also warned politicians and movie stars would be arrested if they mount the stage and issue political statements.

Former President Corazon Aquino, senators, congressmen and other politicians who had said they would join the prayer rally would be confined to the Quirino grounds.

De Villa said Velarde had been informed of the program and had expressed cooperation with the Church. She said there was no official contact with Villanueva whose group, along with Iglesia ni Cristo, had announced support of the prayer rally.

"We don't have problems with that," said Villanueva's son, party-list Rep. Jack Villanueva. He said his father would not show up on Sunday on the grandstand.

The rally was called by angry bishops after President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives last week railroaded and in a rowdy plenary rammed through a resolution

POLITICIANS A21

NATIVITY SCENE PLUS ONE, or what's wrong with this picture? President Arroyo appears to disrupt the serenity of the endlessly loved Christmas tableau. But, folks, it's just for show—his that is. Directed by Lupita Kashiwahara, Ms Arroyo is filming her Christmas message with the life-sized "baket" as prop in the Palace grounds on Thursday. EDDIE MALUCAY

HENRY SY

Sy, Tan, Zobel lead list of 40 richest Pinoys

MALL TYCOON HENRY SY IS one of three billionaires topping a list of the Philippines' 40 richest people who have a combined net worth of $16 billion, Forbes magazine reported in its latest Asian edition. (Full list on Page A6.)

Forbes Asia released its first Philippines' rich list, but said that as a group, the 40 wealthiest Filipinos are the least affluent when compared with their counterparts in the region.

The magazine attributed that to the Philippines' chronic political instability and its small stock market, with an estimated capitalization of $50 billion.

The Dec. 25 issue appeared on the newsstands yesterday.

According to Forbes Asia, Sy has a net worth of $4 billion, followed by another Chinese-Filipino magnate, Lucio Tan, with a net worth of $2.3 billion.

Sy, 82, owns 27 shopping malls in the Philippines and several others in China. He also owns Banco de Oro, a universal bank, and has substantial shares in China Bank and Equitable-PCIBank. He also owns Highlands Prime Holdings, a high-end property developer.

Tan, 72, owns Philippine Airlines, the country's flag carrier. His business interests include tobacco (Fortune Tobacco), liquor (San Miguel Brewery and Tanduay Holdings), and banking (Philippine National Bank and Allied Bank).

He also has extensive property holdings in Hong Kong, China and other parts of Asia.

Jaime Zobel de Ayala, 72, came in third on the Forbes list of richest Filipinos with a net worth

SY, TAN, A6

LUCIO TAN

JAIME ZOBEL

DANDING COJUANGCO

It's official: GMA jumps off Cha-cha express

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has jumped off her self-styled Charter change express in the face of a firestorm of protests against a Palace-House initiative to railroad a constituent assembly in amending the Constitution without the Senate's participation.

"Philippine democracy will always find the proper time and opportunity for Charter reform at a time when the people deem it ripe and needful and in the manner they deem proper. The nation must consolidate now and I call upon all our institutions and sectors to stand as one for the country's future," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

Also yesterday, the House of Representatives voted to archive its resolution convening a constituent assembly (Con-ass) this week to revise the Constitution and adopt the parliamentary system.

Gabriel Claudio, presidential political adviser, said that Malacañang was now training its sights on next year's elections for senators, governors and local officials.

"It'll trade lead to the elections of May 2007," Claudio told the Inquirer. He said the administration's candidates for the Senate will be an-

IT'S OFFICIAL A13

Pozon violating VFA; Smith appeals case

By Armand N. Nocum

LANCE CPL. DANIEL SMITH YESterday asked the Court of Appeals to stop the implementation of a Makati judge's order that he continue to be detained at the Makati City Jail.

In a petition he is temporary restraining order filed by his lawyers, the US Marine convicted of raping a Filipina woman also assailed Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon for purportedly misinterpreting the pertinent provisions in the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement and for holding views "in direct contravention" of the VFA.

"Where the law is clear, there is no room for interpretation. For the first duty of the court is to apply the law. The court has no power to change but only to interpret the law as it stands at any time," read the opening statement of Smith's 22-page petition.

"In a situation where, despite the clear and unequivocal language of the law, a magistrate, willingly or unwittingly, insists on an interpretation ... that is diametrically opposed to, and in direct contravention of, the express provisions of law, petitioner ... submits that [the] magistrate committed grave abuse of discretion that may be remedied through certiorari," it read.

Thus, according to Smith through his lawyers led by Jose Justiniano, there is no basis for Pozon's

POZON A8

HE'S HOT but Judge Pozon keeps his cool.

Judge says Constitution, int'l law are on his side

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE FILIPINO JUDGE WHO HAD CONVICTED A US Marine of raping a Filipino woman yesterday said that he had the Constitution and international law in mind when he dismissed the soldier's request to be returned to US custody.

Reluctant to be lionized for a decision described by many as brave and patriotic, Judge Benjamin Pozon told the Inquirer that his decision to junk the request of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith despite the concurrence in it of Philippine and US authorities was faithful to the spirit of the debated RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

"It's in compliance with the VFA. Pwede ito along konsultasyon (Case I deviate from it) when it's pari

JUDGE A8

Esperon clears 2 officers at start of court-martial

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

CAMP CAPINPIN, TANAY, RIZAL—Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. dropped a bombshell at the start of the court-martial of 30 officers led by ex-Philippine chief Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and ex-Scout Ranger chief Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, acquitting two of the accused without any explanation.

The officers went on trial for allegedly plotting a coup against President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier this year.

The alleged plot was to have been carried out with communist rebels and other anti-Arroyo groups on the 20th anniversary of the fall of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Feb. 24.

Esperon issued the order to exclude Lieutenant Colonels Romulo Gualdrapa and Valentin Hinon, both from the Marines, from the charge sheet on the eve of the court's first hearing here.

Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, chief of the AFP Southern Luzon Command and court president, announced Esperon's order to drop the charges against Gualdrapa and Hinon before the court could be formally convened.

While the remaining 28 accused congratulated Gualdrapa and Hinon, their defense counsels roundly protested the arbitrary amendment to the charge sheet.

One lawyer even questioned whether the trial was being con-

ESPERON/CLAIMS A13

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Misuari flies home to register

DAGGED: Nur Misuari is right (tipped as he boards a vehicle to take him to the airport.

By Jobo S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—DETAINED Moro leader Nur Misuari, was allowed to fly to his hometown in Jolo onboard a chartered flight from here yesterday so as to register for the 2007 elections.

Misuari, who said he intends to run as governor of the Sulu capital, arrived in this southern city yesterday morning onboard a Cebu Pacific flight from Manila with five escorts from the police's Special Action Force (SAF). He was also accompanied by officials from the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and several ranking members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Misuari led the MNLF through decades of secessionist revolt then became first governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) after a peace agreement with the government in 1996. However, he was accused of ordering his men to attack an army base in 2001 and has been in military custody since 2002.

The renegade governor was on his second day of his seven-day sojourn to his hometown Region. The Comelec removed the names of voters who did not revalidate their registration, including that of Misuari who was in jail in Laguna.

Armed with a court-approved pass, Misuari was temporarily billeted at the Orchid Garden Hotel near the airport, where he stayed for almost four hours before taking the chartered plane to Jolo.

He was not allowed to talk with media or guests during his stay here.

Brig. General Benjamin Dolorfino of the government's Ad Hoc Joint Action Committee (AHJAC) said Misuari was prohibited from talking with anyone except in his security escorts and OPAPP officials.

"He is bound by a court order against meeting with any group and making public statements," Dolorfino said.

Jamasali Alabadalman, vice chair of the AHJAC joint monitoring committee, said Misuari was excited to see his people and relatives.

"He was happy to be with his people and we are also happy that the government granted him his right to call-type in his own homeland," Alabadalman said.

He said Misuari would be registering in Barangay Tulay in Jolo.

Misuari was expected to finish his registration in time for his return flight to Manila yesterday evening. With a report from Joeffry Alakiran

PROFILES

NBI bares plot to kill Davao solon

POLITICIANS YESTERDAY WERE ADVISED to beef up their security as the National Bureau of Investigation had uncovered an assassination plot against House Majority Leader Prospero Pichay, the congressman by Davao City's first district.

"Government officials should take extra care because the 2007 elections are nearing," said Reynaldo Esmeralda, the NBI deputy director for regional operations service.

The NBI warned Negrales against attending a Christmas party at the Grand Regal Hotel in Davao City last Wednesday because of information it had received.

The congressman's son, Karlo, attended the Christmas party of the Association of Regional Executives of National Agencies (Arenas) in his father's stead.

The source warned that Negrales would be killed if he went to the party, Esmeralda said.

"Our informant told us that Lanao-based gunmen were hired to kill Negrales for P5 million," he said.

Negrales said the plot would not stop him from "functioning the same and normal way."

In a text message, he said he had no idea who could be behind the plot.

"I have no idea why I am being hit. But assassination is part of the hazards of politics. It's up to the Lord if he will allow it. My life will go on and I will still proceed with my normal way," he said.

Aside from suspicious-looking individuals looming around the Negrales residence in Davao City, Karlo said he noticed a suspicious-looking character on board a red motorcycle outside the hotel last Wednesday.

Esmeralda said an artist's sketch was made of the suspect.

"We are likewise looking into how this can be connected to Jhong Hay. Robert Jaworski Jr.'s case," Esmeralda said.

Jaworski's son exploded in Jhong last Tuesday but the congressman was unhurt.

Esmeralda said the assassination plot against Negrales was uncovered by the local NBI office in Davao City.

"According to the information that we got, the assassination would be shot during or after the party...so we have advised him not to attend the party," he said.

Esmeralda said the NBI has not been able to determine the motive but was able to identify at least four suspects.

He said the suspects were all from the autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and were being hunted down. Marjorie Ortiz with Joeffry Bajon, Inquirer Mindanao

Antiterror troops press pursuit of Abu Sayyaf

GOVERNMENT FORCES HAVE INTENSIFIED operations against suspected al-Qaida-linked militants to prevent a possible attack when postponed twin Asian summits involving 18 heads of state resume next month, a top security official said Thursday.

The senior counterterrorist operations by police and military forces were under way from Metro Manila to southern Philippines, including 300 armed and clandestine operatives, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he's not authorized to talk to the media.

Intelligence teams have not encountered any presence of the militants, including those from the local Abu Sayyaf group or the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyah, in Cebu—the venue of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' summit and an East Asian summit—but security measures were in place to prevent chaos entry, he said.

Intelligence assessments showed that the militants had planned to disrupt the summit but were hampered by a lack of funds and government offensives that have kept them mostly on the run, the official said.

As far as they know, Abu Sayyaf chief Khaddafy Janjalani and top Indonesian terror suspect Dulmatin, two militants who were reported to have planned attacks against the Asian summits, have not been able to escape from isolation to reassume U.S.-backed offensives. Other militants were also on the run from troops in mostly Maguindanao province, he said.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's government abruptly postponed the Dec. 11-13 annual summits Friday, citing a typhoon that was blowing near Cebu, which hosts the country's second largest city. At some functions expected, the typhoon largely spared the island province.

Security officials, however, said the postponement was influenced by external over terror threats. British and other foreign travel advisories had warned that militants may be in the "final stages of planning attacks."

A ranking police official, who also refused to be named, said planned anti-government protests this week, along with fresh coup rumors, may have also been considered by Arroyo.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said Tuesday that the threat to the summits was twofold: the typhoon and terrorists.

Arroyo has faced stinging criticisms due to the postponement. Japanese Trade Minister Akira Amari called the typhoon explanation "extremely puzzling" and said the situation has undermined the Philippines' credibility.

Abraham Puyat, head of the summit organizing committee, reiterated that the typhoon prompted the postponement and added it was backed by Asean's 10 member countries, many of which have confirmed their attendance in the summits' proposed rescription (a.k.a. history).

The leaders of Asean's dialogue partners—Australia, China, Japan, India, South Korea and New Zealand—have yet to confirm their attendance, he said. AP

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E. Visayas: Let there be light

TACLOBAN CITY—LET THERE BE LIGHT ON Christmas Day.

The National Transmission Corp. (Transco) and some electric cooperatives in the Eastern Visayas are doubling their efforts to restore electricity to the typhoon-hit areas of the region before Christmas Day.

A special assessment conducted by Transco showed that at least 60 electrical poles were damaged when typhoon "Reming" hit the region on Dec. 9.

Edna Legaspina, the Ormoc City-based Transco's corporate communications officer, said the inspections of transmission lines to determine the extent of the damage were still going on.

Ramon Isidro, Transco department manager for the Leyte-and Samar area, was at the head of a group conducting an aerial survey at the same time that Transco line inspectors were conducting line-by-line foot patrol inspections, said Legaspina.

Transco has already restored power to most of Tacloban City and the towns of Mangaldog, Sta. Fe, Javo, Palompon, Tanga, Capoocan, Carigara, Barugo, San Miguel, Dulag, Salcedo, Jaro, Tolosa, Julita, Abuyog and Mahaplag.

Electricity has also been restored in about 80 percent of households in the western Samar capital of Catbalogan.

But Northern Samar, which was badly hit by typhoon Milenyo last September, and Eastern Samar, where typhoon Reming made its landfall last December, have remained without electricity.

At least 10 towns are still without electricity in Eastern Samar, the hardest hit of the three provinces on Samar island.

Their having light on Christmas Day would apparently depend on how fast the transmission lines supplying power, directly or indirectly to these provinces can be restored.

Eleanor G. Lubrin, Inquirer Visayas

Land reform issue far from over in Yulo estate

By Blancahe S. Rivera

THE FIGHT FOR THE VAST YULO ESTATE in Laguna is far from over as another group of farmers has asked the Department of Agrarian Reform to place some 397 hectares of the family's landholdings in the land reform land inventory.

Many a group of around 200 farmers whose families have been tilling the former sugarcane plantation for years, has filed a petition for revocation of the exemption from land reform granted to the Yulo Farm Realty and Development Corp., a Yulo-owned corporation.

In a petition filed last Dec. 12, Mikap asked the DAR to place under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program 397 hectares of Yulo property in Barangay Sto. Tomasgo, where the group's Fort Sto. Domingo and the Laguna Technopark are located.

Mikap asked the DAR to issue a cease-and-desist order against the Yulos to stop them from disposing of the property by the farmer-tillers, actual possessors occupying the land.

The farmers said there was "no compelling reason to exempt or exclude any agricultural lands from CARP coverage, citing a notification from the zoning office of Sta. Rosa saying that 52 of the 397 hectares were still planted to fruit trees.

The DAR exempted 397 of 1,633 hectares of Yulo land in Sto. Domingo from CARP coverage after the local government classified this as industrial land in 1993.

Mikap said another ground for revocation of the order was that the Sta. Rosa Realty and Development Corp. had no personality to file the petition for exemption as it had been dissolved in 2004.

Some 500 farmers trooped to the DAR yesterday to call attention to several other petitions for revocation of exemption of the Yulo properties that have been pending before the DAR.

The DAR has pledged to decide on the petitions before the end of the year.

Kelly Pinto, secretary general of Ateneban ng mga Magsasaka ng Canlubang, said at least 42 families were waiting for the decision on their petition, seeking a revocation of the exemption of 35 hectares in Barangay Canlubang in Calauan town, yet another part of the Yulo estate.

Another 178 farmers are asking that another 1,300 hectares in Calamba, all co-owned by the Yulos, be placed under land reform.

The Yulo property, known by locals as the Canlubang Sugar Estate, comprises some 8,000 hectares of land that traverses four municipalities in Laguna province.

The entire estate was a sugar plantation that has since been converted into industrial parks, residential subdivisions, golf courses and other commercial uses.

It is owned by the Yulo clan, one of the biggest landed families in Luzon. The clan patriarch, Jose Yulo Jr. was a former Chief Justice and Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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Conquer your own mountains, Everest climber tells students

GARBUCE Pursue your passion

By Gerald Cena R. Querubin
Inquirer Visayas Bureau

STA. CRUZ, MARINDUQUE—"YOU HAVE your own mountains to conquer," said Mt. Everest summit-climber Romeo Garduce to about 200 college students in this typhoon-ravaged province.

Speaking to students from various colleges here, Garduce encouraged them to pursue their passions no matter the odds, and to be ready to work hard in order to achieve their goals.

The educated Filipino summiteer braved the heavy rains brought about by typhoon Reming Dec. 8 to grace a seminar entitled "Advancing Goals: The Mt. Everest Experience," sponsored by students from the Marinduque State College and the Santa Cruz Institute.

Garduce emphasized that achieving goals not only takes...

He related to the students his own personal sacrifices, like how he saved his hard-earned income to pursue his passion for mountain climbing instead of buying material things.

"I may not have the material things that other people enjoy, but I can happily with what I am doing and I am not fulfilled," said Garduce.

He said conquering Mt. Everest was not the end of his personal goals and that he was still looking forward to climbing the rest of the "Seven Summits."

In the recommissioning ceremony, the seven summits are the seven highest mountains of the seven continents of the world.

Garduce has so far successfully climbed Mt. Everest in Asia, Mt. Aconcagua in South America and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa. He has also praised Mt. Cho Oyu, the sixth highest mountain in the world.

"Explore every possibility, but stick to the one that you love most," Garduce advised.

He warned the youngsters that obstacles and hindrances would come their way and these may cause them to lose sight of their goals.

"Be ready to face the hindrances and obstacles, and overcome them. If you become faint-hearted, you may end up saying goodbye to your dreams," added Garduce.

After the session, Garduce went to Barangay Landy, one of the heavily damaged villages in this municipality to distribute relief goods.

He also contributed some cash pooled by his peers in the University of the Philippines Mountaineers to the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office.

"We are grateful that Sir. Garduce visited us. His mere presence is enough to give hope to the victims of typhoon Reming and Seniang," said Joel Bacolla, social welfare head of Sta. Cruz.

Spanish for OFWs bound for Spain

By Jovenie Aning

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) in Spain may now avail of training in Spanish language and culture following the signing of an agreement between the labor department and the Instituto Cervantes de Manila, the cultural arm of the Spanish government.

Under the accord, the government and the IC will open two teacher's Spanish language and cultural orientation program to equip qualified OFWs with the language skills to pursue their jobs.

The center will also train call center agents for companies serving Spanish-speaking customers.

The agreement was signed by Labor Secretary Arturo Brion and IC director Jose Bellprat.

Call center jobs

"I expect our accord to help train successfully our engineers for Spanish-language call center jobs at home, as well as to reinforce the welfare of workers under our Pilot Project with Spain to without a knowledge of the Spanish language, there will be no jobs in Spain," Brion said.

"By equipping and jointly certifying our workers in Spanish language skills, we in effect also arm them with protection against the menace of illegal recruiters preying on unsuspecting migrants," he said.

Rodriguez said that Spain was giving importance to the further strengthening of the Spanish language, an international language spoken by 400 million people worldwide.

The DOLE will establish the selection criteria, process and methodology that would ensure suitable levels of qualifications and professionalism.

The syllabus to be used by the ICM and other training institutions will be drawn up by ICM and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

ICM will handle, for a reasonable fee to be paid by the workers, Spanish language and cultural training, supply the teachers for the course and conduct the assessment of workers trained in other institutions.

Pay hike for maids

Meanwhile, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration said has announced that starting tomorrow, Filipino domestic employed abroad would get a monthly basic salary of $400 (about P20,000) under new bilateralies adopted last month.

POEA administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said that under the new rules, the recruiter will no longer be allowed to collect a placement fee from the applicant and can only charge for the processing of work papers.

All domestic he foreign deployment will however pass through a training course in language, culture and other skills to be conducted by Tesda under the government's "Super Maid" program.

Baldoz said she was studying a petition from various recruitment groups asking that deployment release job orders were verified and processed before Dec. 16 be exempted from the new rules pertaining to basic pay and the hiring system.

She said the POEA board was studying whether to allow a brief transition period, until March, before the new rules take effect.

The new hiring rules are meant to ensure higher paying jobs for Filipino domestics and reduce welfare cases involving poorly paid maids.

Some recruiters groups said that without bilateral agreements, the raising of the wage level could cause a decline in maid deployment and the rise of illegal recruitment cases.

Baldoz dismissed the concerns, saying foreign employers would just have to "take it or leave it."

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Sa darating na December 16, sama-sama nating parangalan ang mga **Inspiring Overseas Filipino Entrepreneurs** sa darating na **GoNegosyo for OFWs at Balikbayans** sa Market! Market! Kilalanin at hirangin natin ang kanilang tagumpay, at gawin natin itong inspirasyon! Pumunta na sa GoNegosyo for OFWs at Balikbayans! May mga premya, palaro at mga celebrity guests. Libre po ang entrance! Magsimula na ng sariling negosyo... magsimula na ding magtagumpay!

Day 1 December 15, 2006
10:00 AM - **Opening Ceremonies** • 11:00 AM - **FORUM 1: Ang Kahalagahan Ng Pag-negosyo** • 12:00 NN - **Barcelona Movie Launch** • 1:35 PM - **FORUM 2: May "K" Sa Akong Mag-negosyo?** • 2:25 PM - **FORUM 3: Negosyong Nanawnakad-tangi Para Sa Mga Bagang Bayani** • 4:00 PM - **FORUM 4a: Iba't-ibang Mapagkukunan Ng Perang Pampuhunan** • 4:50 PM - **FORUM 4b: Ating Palaguin Ang Perang Kikitain** • 5:45 PM - **Heart-To-Heart With OFWs** • 6:30PM - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Sinbong Gabi**

Day 2 December 16, 2006
10:30 AM - **Go Negosyo Day 1 Highlights** • 11:30 AM - **Awarding of the Inspiring OFW Entrepreneurs** • 12:00 NN - **FORUM 5: Go Negosyo, Negosyanning OFW! (The Inspiring Entrepreneurs Forum)** • 12:45 PM - **Barcelona Movie Screening** • 2:45 PM - **FORUM 6: Paggapatakbo ng Negosyo, Habang Aka'y Nasa Ibaya (Running a Long-Distance Business)** • 3:25 PM - **Testimony of Sandy Javier of Andok's Manok** • 3:55 PM - **FORUM 7: Paggapahalaga Sa Sarili, Pamilya At Bayan: Susi Sa Pangmatagalang Tagumpay At Makabuluhang Negosyo** • 5:00 PM - **PBA Star Players** • 6:30 - **Games** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Sinbong Gabi**

Day 3 December 17, 2006
10:30 AM - **Go Negosyo Day 1 and Day 2 Highlights** • 12:00 NN - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 1:00 PM - **Sponsors' Segment** • 3:00 PM - **The Franchise Advantage - The Philippine Franchise Association (PFA)** • 6:00 PM - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Sinbong Gabi**

(Business tips, video greetings, raffle prizes, goodies and games in between forums)

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2 DA execs charged as Esperat slay brains

By Alexis Pops

THE CASE OF SLAIN JOURNALIST MARlene Garcia-Esperat has been revived with the Philippine National Police's announcement that it would be filing a new set of murder charges against the alleged masterminds.

The new charges will be filed against Osmeña Montañer, human relations officer of the Department of Agriculture in Soccsargen, Central Mindanao, and Estrella Sahay, the regional accountant, and Director General Avelino Razon, the PNP deputy director for administration.

Razon, who heads the PNP's Task Force Ellang which has been assigned to solve the killings of militants and journalists, said they would be the first time that alleged masterminds of such killings would be charged.

Esperat, a crusading anti-graft journalist, was killed in March 2005 while dining with her children at her home in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat.

Trio's confession

Last October, a Cebu City judge convicted three men and sentenced them to a maximum of 40 years in jail for the murder.

The trio confessed to the murder, saying they had been hired to kill Esperat because of her exposés on corruption against agriculture department officials in Mindanao.

Shortly after the verdict came down, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez ordered state prosecutors to go after the alleged masterminds, saying that the evidence showed that Esperat had been murdered because of her crusade against "well-entrenched grafters in the DA."

The charges to be filed against Montañer and Sahay are based on a sworn statement of Sgt. Bonnie Baroa, a soldier assigned as Sahay's security, said private prosecutor Nena Santos.

In his affidavit, Baroa said that Montañer and Sahay had paid him and three others P120,000 to kill Esperat.

Clear testimony

"His (Baroa's) testimony was clear, direct and categorical: that the money was given to them by Montañer and Sahay for the killing of the journalist. The killing was on the orders of the masterminds," Santos told reporters.

Baroa and his family have been placed under the government's Witness Protection Program.

Santos said an administrative case would also be filed before the Supreme Court against Judge Priscila Pelicano of the Tacurong City regional trial court.

Another set of cases will be filed before the Ombudsman against Catalano City assistant prosecutor Yusof Sonda for allegedly "whitewashing" the case.

Among the charges to be brought against Pelicano and Sonda are obstruction of justice, rendering an unjust judgment, giving to accused unwarranted benefits and advantages in the discharge of their official functions through bad faith, serious misconduct, dishonesty, conduct prejudicial to public service and violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Palmones issued an arrest warrant against Montañer and Sahay May 20, 2005. But the warrants were never implemented.

Charge of venue

At the time, Santos, as counsel for the Esperat family and the Freedom Fund for Journalists, requested a change of venue from Tacurong City to Cebu City "because of the tremendous influence of the accused masterminds in the area."

On July 25, 2005, Palmones issued an order recalling the arrest warrants against the two alleged masterminds, without a hearing, based on a reinvestigation conducted by Sonda.

On Aug. 31, 2005, Palmones dismissed the case against Montañer and Sahay, again without a hearing, saying there was no probable cause.

In November 2005, the Supreme Court transferred the venue of the case to Cebu City.

On Oct. 7, 2006, Cebu City Judge Iris Bermudez convicted Dorry Cabagay, Randy Cercio and Ernesto Bantuas for the murder and acquitted Bansa.

But Bermudez denied a motion to exclude Montañer and Sahay as the accused in the case saying he did not have jurisdiction over them after their names had been struck out by Palmones.

Santos said that because Montañer and Sahay were never arrested and arraigned, there would be no double jeopardy involved with the filing of the new case.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 15, 2006
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading: Is 48:17-19
Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19

Jesus said to the crowds, "How, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplace, about whom their companions complain: 'We played the flute for you but you would not dance. We sang a funeral song but you would not cry!'

For John came fasting and people said: 'He is possessed.' Then the Son of Man came, he ate and drank, and people said: 'Look at this man! A glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet the outcome will prove Wisdom to be right."

Commentary

God is pleading and begging us to listen. If only we would heed God's Word, then God would heed us, and so, he our vindication and even our descendants would know the richness and goodness of God. This is the Holy One of Israel!

And Jesus laments and decries his own people. Acting like spoiled children, whining and complaining. We know nothing of the wisdom of repentance or the wisdom of Jesus, the Sacred Other. Both Jesus look at us, disgusted and frustrated because we still not listen or obey!

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Bush tells RP to respect VFA pact, says DFA

By Nikko Dizon

US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush has restated the need for the Philippine government to abide by the 1998 Visiting Forces Agreement in connection with the case of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"President Bush mentioned the case of [Smith] and said that the Philippine government must respect an agreement," the DFA said in a statement issued yesterday.

Bush was apparently concerned over Smith's detention at the Makati City Jail and raised the custody issue with Philippine ambassador to the Washington Willy Gaa when the latter presented his credentials to the US President at the White House on Dec. 7.

"Ambassador Gaa informed President Bush that the executive department is one with the US government on the issue and updated him of the actions being undertaken by the Philippine government," the DFA said.

In his ruling on Wednesday dismissing Smith's request that he be returned to US custody, Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon cited Philippine sovereignty.

He said that should Smith be returned to US custody, "the Philippines would have no jurisdiction over the facilities run by the United States/US military/US military authorities, and the Philippine courts would be deprived of its duty of supervision over the detention of the convicted accused."

Pozon violating VFA; Smith appeals case

From page A1

ruling requiring his continued detention in the city jail.

Contrary to legal tenets

Pozon had convicted Smith, 22, of raping the then 22-year-old Filipina woman called "Nicole" at the Subic Bay Freeport on Nov. 1, 2005, and ordered that he be held in the city jail.

On Wednesday, the judge dismissed the soldier's request to be returned to the custody of military authorities at the US Embassy, where he and his three co-accused—three acquitted and another out of the country—were held for the duration of the trial.

But Smith said Pozon had "engaged in judicial legislation in lending his own suggestions in what is an otherwise clear provision of the VFA [on the detention of charged American servicemen]."

"We are of construing the term 'judicial proceedings' to exclude the appeals process is simply unwarranted and runs contrary to basic legal tenets," the soldier said.

Smith said it was not correct to say that the term "judicial proceedings" did not include the period to appeal just because there was no longer a need for him to appear before the appellate court.

He also said the judge displayed grave abuse of discretion in ruling that Article 5, Paragraph 6 of the VFA applied only to the proceedings in the trial court and no longer after conviction of judgment.

"What is important is that the person of the petitioner remains with responsible authorities in order to ensure that he is present before the proper Philippine authorities in the event that the trial court's judgment of conviction is upheld by the appellate court and becomes final," he said.

Gov't intervention

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Office of the Solicitor General is expected to file today a "petition in intervention" backing Smith's petition that he be returned to US custody.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters that the government must "participate in intervention" in the issue.

"The intervention of the government would be when the private lawyer brings this up before the Court of Appeals," Bunye said.

He said he was reiterating what Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the other day that the government through the DOJ would intervene when Smith's lawyers question Judge Pozon's dismissal of the trial court's request for transfer of custody.

Solicitor General Edgardo Interior/Barbers said in a phone interview that lawyers from his office and the DFA were meeting yesterday to discuss Smith's petition.

Barbers had yet to know the outcome of the meeting a press time, but said it was "likely" that the DFA through the DOJ would like to

SMITH

have a "supervisory intervention."

He said that while the DFA was not a party to Smith's case—strictly, he noted, was a "criminal" case—the government had to intervene on the issue of custody "in accordance with the VFA."

He also said his office was getting involved in the case because the DFA was its client.

Gonzalez's warning

Justice Secretary Gonzalez warned that Pozon's Wednesday ruling was threatening Philippine ties not only with the United States but also with Australia.

The Philippines is finalizing a Security of Forces Agreement with Australia to cover future military exercises between the forces of the two countries, Gonzalez said in an interview.

"With this kind of shenanigans, Australia may back out and claim we will not follow [the agreement], anyway," he said.

Gonzalez said that while the VFA imposed "no sanctions," the noncompliance of the agreement would affect the country's ties with its foreign partners.

US spokesman

"If we cannot respect our treaty obligations, who will expect our country to keep faith with the treaties we sign later on?" he said.

Outraged by Gonzalez's position, Philippine party-list lawmakers called for his resignation.

Rep. Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis, Rep. Joel Virador of Bayan Muna and Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales of Akbayan also criticized Gonzalez for his disparaging comments against Judge Pozon.

Beltran said Gonzalez was "acting and talking more like a spokesman of the United States" instead of "an official of the Philippine government and speaking on the Philippines."

He told the justice secretary's "hatred for the Left" had seriously impaired his judgment.

Judge Pozon can do a better job than Gonzalez as justice secretary in least Pozon's stand on national sovereignty and peace is clear and unshakable," Beltran said.

Rosales said the executive branch "should be ashamed of the way it is behaving."

"The [Department of Justice] is essentially saying that [only] should get special treatment now. Enough our local court has found him guilty [of rape]," she said, adding:

"Instead of raising the ambiguity of the VFA provision providing for custody during judicial proceedings, the DOJ is taking hook, line and sinker the line that the VFA is done and not subject to any supervision, which is what Pozon disagreed with.

Ambiguous VFA terms

"The challenge is to make sure that we defend the appeal go to the appellate court and the Supreme Court, the entire judicial independence is assured, in such sensitive to the presiding and scrutinizing of the executive [branch] to protect BFAS relations, or more specifically military aid."

Hindus reiterated his call for the scrapping of the VFA, adding that he and his parliament in Bayan Muna had filed House Resolution No. 1008 making the immediate termination of the agreement.

Former senator Sergio Osmeña III VFA provides the US government all the excuses to get the likes of Smith and all future US criminal offenders out of the breach of Philippine laws. The case of Nicole is added reason for the VFA to be immediately scrapped," he said. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Philip C. Tubeza

Judge says Constitution, int'l law on his side

From page A1

of the law of the land?" said Pozon, the presiding judge of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150.

RJ Pozon would say about Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's statement on his decision—among others, that his interpretation of the VFA was "wrong," and that his "agenda" was "to please the Left"—was that the latter was "restricted to his own opinion."

Gonzalez denied on Wednesday the request of Smith, 22, to be returned to US custody pending an appeal of his rape conviction, for which the judge had sentenced him to up to 40 years in jail on Dec. 4.

The ruling set aside the recommendation of the US Embassy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Justice in the moral that, as explained in the 1998, US authorities were entitled to custody of Smith until final disposition on his case.

Smith had invoked the legal protection afforded visiting US troops under the VFA, but the judge ruled that US authorities would no longer need to take custody of the soldier because he would not be required to appear in court during the appeals process.

Philippine supervision

Pozon further said that ruling otherwise would deprive Philippine courts of the "duty of supervision over the detention of the convicted accused under Philippine laws."

Still, he said in the ruling, was, since his "the accused's obligation under the said treaty" he committed Smith to the Makati City Jail in holding facility for crimes suspects facing trial, instead of the National Penitentiary (where ordinary convicts are sent upon completing their appeals).

Smith had wanted Pozon to recall his Dec. 4 order committing him to the MCJ.

"All law students know that when there is a conflict between an international treaty and the Constitution, the Constitution prevails when the trial is in a local court. The international agreement would prevail if the dispute is before an international court of law," said Pozon, a professor of international, constitutional and political law at his alma mater, the University of the East.

Bouquet of flowers

As Pozon prepared to leave his chambers for an appointment yesterday afternoon, the women's group Akbayan gathered in front of Makati City Hall to express appreciation for his ruling.

Led by Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales, the group—roughly 20 people—had wanted to give Pozon a "People's Medal of Valor" for his ruling that, according to the lawmaker, "restored public confidence in the justice system" and assured Filipino pride.

But Pozon said the staff is still the group that he was "responsible by declining the offer." A staff member met Rosales at City Hall lobby and accepted a bouquet of flowers she had brought for the judge.

Rosales surmised that Pozon did not want to "make a big thing out of what he did."

"He hasn't given us his, saying: 'He's a man of conscience, a man of valor, an independent man, a man of integrity.'

"He will be remembered by the Filipino people. That is what is most important because he has done his service to the people," she added.

The lawmaker also said she would file a resolution in Congress "articulating our appreciation for [his] courage and valor ... in defending the sovereign rights of the Filipino people and the Filipino nation."

Person of integrity

Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino, also of the Makati RTC, said that to "whatever ruling" Pozon had made, she was confident that it was based on the evidence and the law.

"Those [political and diplomatic issues surrounding Smith's case] are all outside ... [of] public cases take care of that ... He relied based on the case before him. He is a person of integrity and jurisprudence," said Delorino, who recalled meeting Pozon at a judges' conference in Iloilo three years ago and sharing a cab with him even when they were still strangers then.

Before joining the Makati RTC in December 2003, Pozon, 56, was a judge at the Taguig Metropolitan Trial Court. He also worked at the Public Attorney's Office, where he served as counsel for persons who could not afford private lawyers.

The case involving Smith and complainant "Nicole" is his first rape case. In a previous interview, he said he was moved to tears when he was drafting his decision.

"Both of them, the complainant and Smith, are very young. And ... I am also a father, and I also have children, so it's really very hard to decide," said the father of three.

Respect

In his court, records of the rape case—witness' open volumes of pleadings, documentary evidence and stenographic notes, among others—have been recalled for reassessment in the Court of Appeals, where Smith has taken his request to be returned to US custody.

In a statement, Bunye said he respected Pozon's decision to appeal the case to the appellate court.

"We also respect the decision of the judge in this case. We will continue to work with the Philippine government to ensure that the rights of all parties concerned are protected," he said.

Sy, Tan, Zobel lead Forbes' list of 40 richest Filipinos

From page A1

at $2 billion. He is the patriarch of Ayala Corp., the Philippines' oldest conglomerate, whose business interests include real estate and hotels (Ayala Land Inc.), financial services (Bank of the Philippine Islands), telecommunications (Globe Telecom Inc.), water infrastructure (Manila Water Co. Inc.), electronics and information technology (Integrated Microelectronics Inc. and Ayalaa Technology Investments Inc.) and automotive (Honda Cars Makati Inc. and Isuzu Automotive Dealership Inc.).

He retired in April and turned over business operations to his executives.

The magazine also noted the story of John Gokongwei Jr., who ranked ninth on its list of richest Filipinos, with a net worth of $790 million.

After the death of his wealthy father at age 13, Gokongwei peddled bread, soap and vanilla during World War II. He put up a textile importing company when he was 19.

At the age of 30, he ventured into food manufacturing and set up Universal Robina Corp. (URC). His empire expanded into what is now JG Summit Holdings Inc., whose subsidiaries include Cebu Pacific Air, Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc., PBR Private Power Corp., JG Summit Petrochemical Corp., Litton Mills Inc., Robinsons Land Corp., Robinsons Savings Bank, Eon Cellular, United Industrial Corp. and UBC.

Gokongwei, 80, retired in 2003. His brother James now serves as chair and chief executive officer of JG Summit, while his son Lance is president and chief operating officer.

Five women also appear on the list, the richest among them is Beatrice Gomez, with a net worth of $160 million. Her late husband, Jose Dee Gomez, founded United Laboratories, one of the country's top pharmaceutical firms. Unilab, also provides health care products in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam. Report by Tom Allwood in Quarter Ascuncion.

THE TOP 40

GEORGE TY: No. 3

JOHN GOKONGWEI: No. 4

1. Henry Sy - $4 billion
2. Lucio Tan - $2.3 billion
3. Jaime Zobel de Ayala - $2 billion
4. Eduardo Cojuangco - $840 million
5. George Ty - $830 million
6. John Gokongwei Jr. - $790 million
7. Tony Tan Caktiong - $670 million
8. Andrew Tan - $660 million
9. Emilio Yap - $520 million
10. Oscar Lopez - $515 million
11. Enrique Razon Jr. - $285 million
12. Andrew Gotianun - $280 million
13. Enrique Aboitiz - $275 million
14. Alfonso Yuchengco - $225 million
15. Menardo Jimenez - $210 million
15. Gilberto Duavit Jr. - $210 million
17. Ramon del Rosario - $205 million
18. Felipe Gozon - $160 million
19. Beatrice Gomez - $160 million
20. Luis J. L. Ocampo - $150 million
21. David M. Consunji - $145 million
22. Roberto Ongpin - $140 million
23. Benjamin K. Tayuco Jr. - $140 million
23. Betty Ang - $140 million
24. Manuel Villar - $130 million
25. Ramon Ang - $100 million
25. Roberto S. Benedicto - $90 million
27. Oscar Hilado - $85 million
28. Vivian Que Azcona - $80 million
29. Manuel Zamora - $75 million
30. Magdalena Albarracin - $75 million
31. Jesus Tambunting - $70 million
32. Frederick Dy - $65 million
33. Tomas Alcantara - $60 million
34. Lourdes Montinola - $50 million
35. Salvador Enrigera - $45 million
36. Antonio Serra - $40 million
37. Wilfred Steven Uytengsu Jr. - $35 million
38. Philip E Ang - $35 million
39. Mariel Prieto - $30 million
40. Manuel Pangilinan - $25 million

AI presses police on death squads

By Alvin Papa

A RANKING EXECUTIVE OF THE international human rights group Amnesty International (AI) met yesterday with police officials investigating the spate of political killings in the country to reiterate their appeal for more government action against "death squads" and vigilantes that have victimized over 200 activists and journalists in the past five years.

Timothy Farrer, acting deputy director of the AI's Asia-Pacific Regional Programme met on Tuesday with Philippine National Police Deputy Director Jesus Verzosa, who is also chief of Task Force Usig which is looking into the extrajudicial killings, and presented to Mr. Verzosa's office a report released last August entitled "Philippines: Political Killings, Human Rights and the Peace Process."

The report said "the methodology of the attacks, including prior death threats and patterns of surveillance by persons reportedly linked to the security forces, the leftist profile of the victims and climate of impunity which, in practice, shields the perpetrators from prosecution, has led human rights groups to conclude that the attacks are not an unconnected series of criminal murders but constitute a politically motivated pattern of killings."

The organization is also gravely concerned that members of the security forces may have been directly involved in the killings, or else have tolerated, acquiesced to, or been complicit in them."

For his part, Farrer gave the Al executive the initial results of their own investigations which raise the possibility that some of the killings are part of local communist purges.

"The Task Force is conducting exhaustive investigations into the motivations and facts of the killings, based on accounts of witnesses and relatives of the victims," Raincourt said.

REMEMBERING 'GA KING' Susan Roces, widow of Fernando Poe Jr., and their daughter Mary Grace light candles at his tomb inside the Manila North Cemetery on the second-death anniversary yesterday. AP/JAYSON

Temporary water interruption in San Juan and Mandaluyong needed to upgrade facilities

Manila Water is currently upgrading its distribution lines and facilities to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. We regret that we will have to temporarily interrupt water supply in portions of San Juan and Mandaluyong City starting 9:00 p.m., Friday, December 15, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., Saturday, December 16, due to the interconnection of mainlines. The following areas will be affected: Barangays Corazon De Jesus, Pasadena, Addition Hills, P. Cruz, Batis, Tibagan, Sta. Lucia in San Juan and Barangays Kabayanan and Maytunas in Mandaluyong City.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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Sea traffic rerouting eyed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PUERTO PRINCESA City—There may be no traffic jams here, but accidents can always happen to the vast lanes and millions of fish-as it did.

How about implementing a traffic rerouting scheme at sea?

Regulation

Hoping to prevent the commonly encountered rich marine life-to-net mix, government officials and environmentalists have proposed regulating sea traffic.

The Department of Foreign Affairs is already planning to submit a proposal to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to have the country declared as among the Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSA) in the world, according to Environment Undersecretary Jose Atienza Jr.

The declaration will lead to the banning of tankers with hazardous cargoes in the country, which keep many from passing into cities, even requiring ships to have local pilots onsite to sail-in with the areas they are in pass through.

The proposal was prompted by the oil spill off Guimaras Island four months ago creating extensive damage to the environment and which doused the various threats on our seas, Encomienda said.

"This (an oil) oil spill (the unreported isolated oil spills and unrecorded cases of poaching, sinking collision, fire and capsizing) heightens the level of threat that poses pressure and danger to [our seas]," Encomienda added.

"In terms of biodiversity we have an over-greater number than say the Great Barrier Reef (in Australia)," Encomienda also said.

Barrge ride

The IMO declared the Great Barrier Reef as a PSSA in November 1990. It is one of the only 11 PSSAs declared so far in the world.

The proposed ban, however, will be limited for a 5-mph rule, however.

Foreign countries whose vessels pass through our waters would mainly block the attempt to regulate sea traffic, Encomienda said.

Freedom

"The country stands at the crossroads of the busiest sea lanes in the world which accounts for more than half of the world's maritime traffic," he pointed out in a paper he presented in government officials and environmentalists joining a conference here on the protection of the Tubbataha Reefs and the Sulu Sea.

In the end, it would boil down to freedom to navigate (and the protection of human) weighed against the need to protect nature, he told the listeners.

Oil spills

But the risk of oil spills is not the only reason there being to protect marine life would like to see better control of sea traffic.

Passing ships also leave behind solid waste, some of which are swept by strong currents into protected areas like the Tubbataha Reefs, a sanctuary of hundreds of marine species.

"Manila may see already ruining plankton," Tubbataha Management Office manager Angelique Songco said.

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Extra income to help stop midwives' exodus

MANILA, CITY— Alarmed by the exodus of doctors and nurses who find lucrative jobs abroad, reproductive health advocates want to provide additional income to midwives to encourage them to stay.

Dr. Esther Dalmacio-Lucas, executive director of Philippine Nurses' Economic Organization Council on Population, Health and Welfare, said in a forum on Tuesday that midwives would earn extra money by promoting the government's vaccination campaign.

She said the program gives midwives compensation or commission from every immunization shot, thanks to the support from pharmaceutical companies.

The average income of a government midwife is P18,000 including benefits, and their sister Doctors, president of the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines. The entry salary for a new midwife is from P7,000 to P9,000 a month.

But many midwives in the provinces still serve because they are the only members of the medical community who remain active in the province, while more doctors and nurses find greener pastures abroad.

"The midwives are the most left behind, that is why we are talking about the bulk of services and (why) doing right now in the MDG," Lucas said.

The law does not require midwives to handle additional medical duties "but they are the only health practitioners who are not there," she said.

Midwives said midwives tend to become more attached to the community they are serving despite the low compensation.

"Money is not everything in us, what midwife want is our community service," Lolita Dizong, a Baguio midwife, said. Desiree Cabuso Inquirer Northern Luzon

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RUDY B. CAMA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

Esperon clears 2 officers at start

By [illegible] A1

ps and House of any participation in the alleged plot to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo in February.

On Nov. 20, Esperon ordered that 39 officers led by Rolando Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin be court-martialed.

At the same time, the AFP chief of staff cleared eight other officers—two Marine officers and six Scout Rangers officers.

No evidence

"It is determined that there is no prima facie evidence against Lieutenant Colonels Rodolfo Lim and Wenn," read Esperon's memo, which ordered Abaya to issue an order to release the two from detention in Fort Bonifacio and to restore them to active duty status as soon as possible.

Esperon apparently overlooked the fact that Evardone retired on Nov. 2, in fact earlier than the rest of the accused, he was not in his military uniform at yesterday's hearing.

Col. Pedro Mariano Cruz Jr., Esperon's Staff Judge Advocate who reviewed the pre-trial investigation (PTI) report on the case, said he received the memo at 10 p.m. on Wednesday and that he was ordered to personally deliver the memo to the court yesterday.

Not a motion, but an order

Defense lawyer said the trial could not proceed without formally amending the charge sheet.

"This is not a motion. This is an order from the convening authority (Esperon). This is a superior of the convening authority so this court has to follow that order," Col. Efren de Alcuaz, the only lawyer among the seven members military court. Col. De Alcuaz lawyer, is the court order Guadalupe and Hawk's release.

The defense lawyers also hotly questioned why they were not given copies of the pre-trial investigation report, which supposedly recommended the dismissal of charges against 29 of the 30 officers investigated.

"It's quite irregular. We never received the re-

THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST: Leaders of [illegible] Mr.-to-Marine-conversation Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda Querubin and Col. Orlando de Leon.

[illegible] or indictment that was necessitated by General Esperon. We don't know what the charge sheet is based on," said Teddy Baguilat, who represents Maj. Rolando Watan Ayo and Lt. Rolando Bunyi of the Marines.

Alfredo Cadiz, counsel of Army Lt. Ryan Pormaguera, said military prosecutors never bothered to furnish them a copy of the PTI report as of the pre-trial advice (PTA) that was supposedly Esperon's basis for ordering the trial.

Lt. Col. Oriel Paglala, the lead prosecutor, insisted that the PTI report was "not necessary" to proceed with the trial. He even said the report was considered "privileged communication."

'Mental dishonesty'

"Do you mean to say that the Chief of Staff can just file a case against anyone as he wants to, [illegible] and when?" Cadiz asked.

Maj. Jeremy Agoncillo, one of the prosecutors, defended the decision to withhold the PTI report, citing a 1991 Supreme Court ruling on the Jose Commendador v. Rosario de Villa case and that case.

Agoncillo said the high court ruled that a trial could proceed even if there was no pre-trial investigation.

"That is mental dishonesty," countered Brig. Gen. Angeles, who represents Army Capt. Ruben Estandian.

She said that in that particular case, the accused officers did not avail themselves of a pre-trial investigation.

"In our case, we participated in a pre-trial investigation but we never are given a copy of the report," she said.

Paglala lectured challenged the defense lawyers: "Why don't you go to the Supreme Court?"

"Why are you to afraid to give us that report?" said Private Bonifacio Cruz's lawyer.

Heated arguments

"We cannot allow this trial freak to continue ... How can we defend our clients when we don't even [illegible] the PTI report?" said Abraham Espela, counsel for Army Lieutenant Gilmore Beatos Thomilles and Edmundo Maldonado.

Many of the lawyers asked that the convening of the military court be postponed so they could prepare a "preemptory challenge" to reject the court members.

After three hours of heated arguments, Major Jr. Gil, acting Agoncillo's

EMOTIONAL MOMENTS: Marine Col. Hernan Florentino and his daughter, seen in this [illegible] moment [illegible] all the other accused and their loved ones.

# of court-martial

Marines arrive in air-conditioned vans, Scout Rangers in open Army trucks

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

BEFORE THE START OF THE COURT-MARTIAL proceedings yesterday, there was a glaring disparity in the treatment of the Marine and Scout Ranger officers.

The Scout Rangers officers, who are detained in a maximum security facility in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, were brought in in open Army trucks. They proceeded to the courtroom with handcuffed to an escort.

Its Scout Ranger chief Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, however, was brought in a separate vehicle and was not handcuffed.

Army Capt. Dante Laygbis, a former Scout Ranger member, was brought in a separate vehicle from the four Bonifacio Inc. soldiers and Senior Airborne Group commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

In contrast, the Marines were brought in from Fort Bonifacio and Fort San Felipe in Cavite City in air-conditioned vans. They were neither handcuffed nor closely escorted.

Some of them were even able to get out of the enclosure un-

escorted during breaks, while the Rangers had to be escorted even when they went to the restroom.

Only Marine Col. Antonio Caringal was not present, as he remains confined at a hospital in Fort Bonifacio due to hepatitis.

The officers used the court breaks to chat with fellow officers and family members or catch up on news about one another.

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OPINION

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Eager beavers

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ MAY INVOKE the name of the president of the United States all he wants, but that's beside the point. Philippine and American jails are crowded with convicts waiting for their appeals to be heard, and they aren't kept in jails that are different from where they will be detained if they lose.

EDITORIAL

Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon is being unfairly portrayed as an unreasonable man. He granted a six-page decision released Wednesday that said the proper place to detain Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith is not the US Embassy instead, Pozon declared, the American soldier sentenced to 40 years for rape ought to remain in a regular Philippine jail until the appropriate Philippine and American authorities formally agree on a detention facility under the terms of the Visiting Forces Agreement. That facility should be under Philippine jurisdiction, the judge added.

We cannot attribute to American officials anything more than they are willing to openly say in public. What they have signified is that they disagree, respectfully enough, with the judge's views and his orders. There have been the usual signals of displeasure, which could affect future relations between the two nations. Such a position and such statements are not only par for the course, but are the obligation of American diplomats tasked with looking after the interests of their citizens.

For all we know, American concerns has been ignited not so much by the Smith verdict—because whether acquitted or convicted, Smith's career in the US Marines would have been ruined because he disgraced the corps—but because either the Filipino legal team defending Smith or Philippine officials gave the US Embassy an impression, perhaps even assurances, that haven't been worth the candle.

This is the only way to explain why Gonzalez is so inadvertently, even ferociously veering close to contempt of court in his behavior and statements. And why Philippine officials, whether in the Department of Foreign Affairs or the Department of Justice seem to be falling over themselves not to promote Philippine interests but to stress their eager-beaver status in the US ambassador.

The US Embassy believes the termination of the legal process comes when the Supreme Court decides on Smith's appeal. Pozon thinks otherwise, and we think most Filipinos would say familiarity with our justice system would agree with him. The judge has also clearly outlined what is permissible as a subject for negotiations, and what is non-negotiable. Pozon himself pointed out that the two governments can figure out where Smith should be detained, but what cannot be discussed is any detention facility that's not on Philippine soil.

The VFA recognizes that for crimes committed against Filipinos, US servicemen should face their accusers in the local courts. In return, the Philippine government grants certain concessions to reassure Americans the accused will be safe and accorded due process. There are provisions in the agreement that are either ambiguous or remain to be fleshed out. Our executive departments—justice and foreign affairs, in particular—must operate within the parameters of Philippine interests, respect for our legal systems, and the maximum leeway given to asserting Philippine sovereignty.

So let both parties come to the negotiating table now, but without our own panel of negotiators trying to outAmerican the Americans in asserting the US government's point of view. The United States will not find itself lacking in willing attorneys to fight for the American position and it has nothing to fear in terms of reckless behavior either on the part of our judges, our penal officials, or even the public. What it has to fear is the eager beaver mentality of its own friends in official circles.

We would have expected our government to immediately begin serious, and dignified, negotiations to clarify the points of disagreement concerning the VFA. And then to work sincerely, honestly and courageously to find a solution that reassures America without selling our justice system down the river. It's not too late for that.

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Our own most hated/distrusted list

THE SOCIAL WEATHER STATION HAS RELeased the continued drop in the satisfaction ratings of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Its latest survey showed that more people are dissatisfied with GMA now than in the previous survey.

I couldn't believe it, so I conducted my own parallel (non-scientific) survey. In this way, I can cast grandstanders on who are the most hated and most distrusted public officials in the Philippines. I am happy to report that it is not GMA who ended at the top. Speaker Jose de Venecia won it hands down. GMA is second in this ticket.

The poll was conducted in eight cities (the Greater Manila Area + Davao + Cagayan de Oro + Iloilo) where JDV was the mastermind. GMA had already bottomed a busy retreat when the collective wrath of the people threatened to sweep her off Malacañang in another people power. That is probably why GMA was no longer the most hated and most distrusted in the eight cities of the VFS.

Following close behind JDV in the most hated/distrusted poll are Albay Representative Edcel Lagman and Edsel Lagman, dubbed why they hated them congressmen so much, a Bicolano said.

"Were living in real suffering and hungry here, without homes to feed, and where were our congressmen when we needed them most? They were in Manila running the Charcha railroad through the house that would load trucks with their selves and their fellow politicians."

"Didn't Lagman try to help them by countervailing DENR investigation here on rare-sighting," added another Bicolano.

Following Villafuerte and Lagman in the most hated/distrusted list are the two prominent Pimentos, Megnidez and Felipe Pimentel. The two were among the many who were implicated in Charcha, or what may be called, in nonmonetary lingo, as JDV's "running dogs." Megnidez, the House majority floor leader, kept his fellow congressmen in line, while Defensor ranged the seas to turn out television talk shows to preach the wonderful advantages of Charcha.

Unemployment the two Pimentos in the most hated/distrusted poll is fellow Cox and Sen. Dimples Cayetano who elected the citizens paying their salaries and watching the House proceedings from the gallery reserved for them that they were mere guests there. "You are not even congressmen," Cagay had barked at them.

Sen. Cayetano Cox and Rep. Commando Arroyo, chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, whose dogged loyalty to JDV cannot be questioned. Arroyo's current up position in the House and his unsuccessful bid for Commission which were to self-serving and greedy that though they wanted the heads of administration associates, they also angered the citizens.

The first non-congressman in the most hated/distrusted list is ironically, somebody who should have the coast of everybody because he is the spokesman of the President Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. There is something strange in him. When he says something, people believe the truth is the opposite. When he says the sky is blue, people believe it is yellow. When he says GMA is a lily-white, people believe she is a colorful blank.

Maybe the reason is that what Bunye gives statements to reporters, he has a pained expression that seems to say he is embarrassed to be forcedto say those things.

"Are you pained?" said one reporter in the corner. "When he answers questions from the press, he can't even look you straight in the face."

"Why don't you believe what he says?" I asked.

"Because what he says is so different from reality," he replied. "They are very transparent liar."

The other Cabinet members behind Bunye in the most hated/distrusted list are the two Justices, Justice Secretary Raul and National Security Adviser Norberto. Their places in the list were no doubt secured by the sensing of Raul to all government employees not to join the massive protest rally on Friday, and by the penchant of Norberto of finding a mistress in every country.

Next on the list is Executive Secretary Ed Ermita. Ermita is running neck and neck in the unbelievability race with Bunye. He has been briefing reporters more and more lately, maybe because they have finally realized that Bunye's credibility is a dish, term. But Ermita's statement are often like Bunye's—far from reality—as his credibility has gone down. It's a lot tiny that is flushed to the cavalier treatment adding "Well you buy a cat from the river" etc ad nauseam.

Other behind Ermita is presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor who has been crying with Ferra in and there in the wine level. Defensor likes to call newsmen to give tips and hints, maybe because he would need the media's help when he runs for senator, so that Ermita had to tell him to "shut up."

"Mike looks more than the blindfold pipes," quipped one Malacañang reporter.

I will end the list here because I'm running out of space. I know there are many more who deserve to be in the most hated/distrusted list, so please write me a resolution to "ask" Secretary to roll so their distrust rating can be weighed against those of others.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKES: The Cox-ena fiasco in the House of Representatives has generated many jokes about the congressmen. The most popular is the one about congressmen being ready to serve two terms: one in office and the other in jail.

This one is the runner-up: Our congressmen's brains have two sides: the left side which has nothing right, and the right side which has nothing left.

The death of a gov't lawyer

I HAVE WRITTEN IN THE PAST ABOUT THE unsolved killings of activists and journalists in this dark period of impunity, but writing about the death of lawyer Bonnie Tadiello is particularly difficult. I knew Bonnie as a colleague and as a friend, and with his mild-blended murder on Dec. 6, the larger national tragedy became personal and struck at night of the heart.

I met Bonnie when we were both delegates to a month-long meeting in Rome to create what we now call the International Criminal Court, which were undoubtedly among the proudest periods the sort of distantly outside that ended Marcos's life. He represented the Office of the Solicitor General and, by now, you might have come across testimonials about his professionalism and dedication to his work.

He had had his own breakfast Paul left their Pandacan residence early that morning, and after alighting from a tricycle at the killing gate, two assailants approached them. Witnesses heard gunshots, and saw Bonnie and Benedict sprawled on the ground. They were rushed to the Ospital ng Maynila but Benedict's brother Bonnie's widow Lois and daughter Bernadette.

His boss, the suspended Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura, said Bonnie was called "Obispo" in the office, both for his worldwide and religious devotion. I smile readily as I write this, because as a secret "Obispo" myself, Bonnie was to life. Class valedictorian in Ateneo Law School and now an assistant solicitor general, he was so committed to his work that, as his body was about to be dressed up at the funeral, his wife had to take a cab to the OSG. Appropriately, he had been working in the office!

Let me add my own small vignette about him—nothing dramatic, nothing more than a snippet of a passing conversation many years back, for which I remember distinctly to this day. When the International Criminal Court was finally approved and we were all in Rome's Fiumicino airport, I noticed Bonnie struggling with giant hair books as we climbed in for our flights. The delegates had been furnished those thick volumes as reference during the drafting, and Bonnie was bringing home two sets, one for himself and the other for the OSG library. I asked him, in the fatigue and frenzy of an airport queue: Are you really bringing those encyclopedic volumes as hand-carried luggage? His reply was plain and straightforward. This is the least I can do for my office, he said, because the OSG has been so good to me and my career, and it's just a small token of thanks.

At his wake, my wife and I had to close our eyes right in prayer as we stood before his coffin, because he had been shot in the head at close range on that, his face, restored as best as he could, was a horrible sight to behold.

The latest development is that President Macapagal-Arroyo has upped to P1 million the reward money, on top of the P300,000 that had earlier been offered by the Southern Police District. I hope the reward will bring out information that will lead to the arrest and conviction.

The Bulletin family has issued a statement that Bonnie had no personal enemy and that their family was not involved in any personal or property dispute. I believe them. Bonnie was an kind, honest, soft-spoken, a consummate professional, the epitome of simple living. The police have ruled out theft, but not cell phone and valuables had not been taken, and Bonnie took two bullets, one in the head and another in the body, superfluous for petty thieves out for a quick buck.

At least, in the case of Bonnie, had he won handling, and Bonnie had his share of high-profile and intensely contested cases. Indeed, there is an even consolation that both Bonnie and Penny

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

Regional Trial Court Judge Hendrik Gingoog, who was gunned down on Dec. 10 last week, worked as counsel and as judge, respectively, on the litigation over Sitio Sumilao I.

Many reporters wondered what gave out in the annals of those who plan and those deaths? Only by even wondering, do we not create too much familiarity to evil inside? Why would anyone wish to hurt Bonnie Tadiello? Who is to punish him, say, for doggedly pursuing an extra-legal position? Frankly, I do not think Bonnie would have changed his legal analysis even under pressure. He was too much of the stickler to rules, and I cannot imagine him buckling down and espousing a view that he honestly thought to be wrong. It just wasn't him.

Is Bonnie to send a message? If so, to whom? Is this but of the Office of the Solicitor General? Or, with the killing of a human rights lawyer in Dalton, Georgia, is the rest of the legal profession?

Once again, I recall the killings and disappearances when we were under martial law. There's a killing office in Sagada, Mountain, that took the killing of Nova Aquino, the image of his body lying on the airport tarmac, to shake the nation out of its lethargy. I suppose the still unknown masterminds wanted to eliminate Aquino as a threat, a total elements, to the climax that the killing Marcos was expected soon to yield.

But what we got was a rather different message. If they can do that to Ninoy, they can do it to any one of us. If they dared eliminate a prominent, internationally known former senator of the Republic, would they think twice before hunting ordinary citizens?

The effect was even more unexpected: the nation ended up not cowed into silence but emboldened into action.

We resent the hysteric "tipping point."

But I suppose that Bonnie's "wish she will send ... for beneath the dashing, noisy waves must even run the silent waters that give the life to course."

(Comment to pascual@upmail.upd.edu.ph)

An interloper and usurper

ANALYSIS

Amanda Fernando

A PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED BY SPEAKER Jose de Venecia has worth an unintentional charge tucked into a fracas between hapless Senators Antonio Trillanes IV and Juan Ponce Enrile. While activist Senator Constancio de The mandate, in which Agapito showed a glass of cold water on the face of Constancio, became a media event—a comic edition—that underlined how extraordinary some of constitutional change is even among lawmakers.

It how hard have to be unsheltered. A press conference is a long-standing institutional forum in which members of the press carry on informed dialogue with the official and private sectors for the purpose of validating issues involving the public interest. The press conference is a multisectoral interaction between journalists and sources of information, giving life to the mandated editorial role of citizens between them.

Journalists have their own ground rules for civilized discourse between protagonists. Constancio studied the conference in Dole Hotel as an unsolicited guest not to create trouble. He had obtained it via Constancio being there. He was an intelligent.

Legally, Constancio has no right to be in our hotel business who must have necessarily thrown him out of the premises for causing public disturbance. He only did let gate crash. As soon as he entered the room, he charged like a raging bull with a harangue of name-calling directed at De Venecia and House leaders for pushing for a unicameral assembly, without Senate participation. Constancio said: "I am completely appalled by your collective gall. You are totally bereft of principles, man's only you are a national disaster." He said the House leaders were a "rubber stamp to the nation."

When reminded by Rep. Luis Villafuerte, "You have a right to ask a question but not to harass anybody," Constancio said, "I have a right to be here. So if you want to continue I have the right to say what I feel."

Pero his rampage, Constancio converted the press conference into a rowdy political rally, a Pinoy dramatic outing de oro, an Edsa people power mob-rousing platform that had nothing to do with expanding public knowledge of salient public issues. By hijacked it as a forum for dispensing polemical drivel.

Constancio is at home in the politics of the arena, the courts in choosing manners that pass for reasoned arguments. In his arena-ordinary behavior, Constancio is said to bring honor down to political street manners, a measure of what has been done that is less gentle than the splash of cold water administratively dgainst like-organized acts are posted on the head of a child being disobeyed.

Agapito said he was offended by Constancio's invasion of the press conference as the premier for introducing of ideas. Of course, he was tired, said Agapito, "He was brutishly bestowded and he didn't want to stop. So he wrestled a dozen of cold water."

Other journalists in the conference room as of heated by Constancio's harangue that they jumped in to stop Constancio from completely taking over the conference.

Constancio did not attack Agapito verbally. He reserved his wrath for the office of De Venecia. So, it has been argued, Agapito had no reason to take things into his hands by using the water cure. Artists was drowned so he a provocateur act.

But Constancio's reaction were more provocative in humiliating than in deed to the press conference.

Some journalists deviant their colleagues for jumping into the fray, and reminded them about the rights of citizens as "free reporters." But incident is intolerable to pretend as a case of free speech, which it is not. It is a case of abuse of free speech. No citizen has a right to slander people whose views he don't agree with.

Agapito is being disciplined by his employers with suspension for his behavior. The students who have marched to the Senate in support of Trillanes broached by Agapito, his competence or ethics as a journalist. What is involved is his reaction to extreme provocation and abuse of the privilege of the conference as a mechanism for informed press-official dialogue on important public issues.

Political institutions, like Congress, have their own ground rules for conducting informed discourse, and the press has its own rules for an orderly exchange of ideas and the press conference is one such mechanism. Constancio's performance turns the chaotic state of their not-political to the more orderly venue to bring out the truth, using a question and answer method.

Constancio did not ask questions. He was not looking for answers. He inflicted his views and was not accommodated. He harangue was a monologue of abuse.

The arena are wide open for Constancio and his likes. They can exercise their abuse there, but there they can be held responsible for breaking the law but only by the courts of justice which are not for inciting to violence, if they go further in the violence of their language. In the arena, they have to contend with more stern reactions than the wisest citizens and they run the risk of having their heads knocked by the police truncheons. When they are campaign over things they don't like, they are not welcome in the precincts of the press conference where the issue before the city they get a splash of cold water on their heads. Journalists don't turn the heads of those who don't agree with them. But they also resist their intimidation unopened.

Gender and the courts

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"SOCIETIES GENERALLY ARE NOT RIGID TOWARD women, requiring them to subdue and shame when they report their having been violated. Rape victims fear that they will be blamed for their have been raped, that they had not invited retaliation, or had not been assertive. The process of investigation focuses of poor on cross-duty, not to mention cases, it's possible emotional damage to the victims during the prosecution of the crime. On the other hand, the harsh hand of social injustice does not motivate apply to the justice."

The above is a quote not from some feminist handbook but from a decision of the Philippine Supreme Court, written by former Supreme Court Justice Josue Bellosillo in the case People vs. Muller, issued in 1998.

Coming as it did two years before the Anti-Rape Act of 1997, which re-classified rape as a crime against persons and no longer against chastity, the decision was hailed as a milestone in terms of its appreciation by no longer classifying rape as an act of lust . . . but as the ultimate expression of contempt for women."

In the anthem of the book "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary" goes on: "The problem with understanding rape as a crime against chastity is that morality which is interpreted to mean virginity or purity will come into play as an element in making decisions. It was just the erroneous assumption that drove the complainant to prove that she is chaste, and therefore worthy of the protection of the statute, even if chastity was not an element in the crime. Using the same requirements, and perpetuating myths that only 'good' and chaste women can be raped, the courts fail in the task of investigating credible rape victims as only those who belong to the good of a Filipina of virtue and chastity and the more 'Maria Clara' type, or those who come from 'good families.'"

* * *

RIDDEL, meanwhile, die hard, and despite years of research, scholarly treaty and jurisprudence, many Filipino judges — and the Filipino public — still play the game of "blame the victim," and demand high moral standards and chaste behavior from a woman before they believe her story of rape.

Even after People vs. Muller established that rape is not a crime of lust, subsequent decisions by the Supreme Court itself, as in the recent acquittal of Senator Estrada and its debate and case and for all the myths and misconceptions about rape, as a result of which they continue to persist. Philippine jurisprudence and are respectful understanding it includes."

Still, hope remains. The Supreme Court of late, especially during the term of Chief Justice Ricardo Davide, has been pursuing a program of gender sensitivity training, starting a gender-sensitivity training program for judges and initiating other activities aimed at helping to make Philippine jurisprudence truly reflective of the Witness and the Rule on Violence against Women and their Children.

These changes, as well as the renewal of the judiciary in institutionalizing gender is an uncertain status, are documented in the book "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary" launched yesterday at the Manila Hotel.

The authors—Soledad Giarrusso, Aurora Javate de Dios, Danielle Tiu-so and Theresa Ballesteros—say the book is meant to raise awareness among judges and justices to "expand and refine their knowledge of gender and gender factors," as well as "to contribute to the development of gender-fair jurisprudence in cases of violence against women and children."

* * *

THE FIRST part of the book is devoted to the results of the first Gender Justice Awards, which was taken judges for their well-considered and well-written gender-sensitive decisions, as well as to a discussion of gender bias in the courts. The second part contains digests of significant decisions of the Supreme Court on GBV cases.

Being given the "Gender Justice" award is one to be treasured. In "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary," for I would list that subsequent strides on gender issues and the country will prominently feature the case of Nicole and the four Marines. It cannot be overstressed, no matter how painful, how easy for its gender aspect, but also for its implications on the forging of an independent foreign policy.

Already, though, the coverage of the case and the subsequent controversy raised by related issues like custody of Smith point to the lingering, indeed, outmoded mentality of Philippine society and its institutions when they go public with their charges of rape. For instance, in insisting on basic Philippine sovereignty in retaining custody of Smith, Judge Benjamin Pozon has been accused by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile of having "taken leave to Nicole and leftist groups." Why does one have to be leftist to think evidence against women is evidence and a human rights violation? Does Enrile so believe that nationalism is the exclusive province of the Left?

* * *

CERTAIN have made much of the statements of the van driver Timoteo Soriano Jr. that no rape occurred while Nicole was inside the van with the four Marines, gleefully looking forward to a "release order" for the four Marines.

Why would the self-serving statement of a driver, who received often prosecutors threatened to include him among the accused, be more credible to those people than the sworn, cried victim of a judge who found probable cause to charge the rapists and the evidence?

If women's groups based in Davao, meanwhile, has written US Ambassador Kristie Kenney to demand the dismissal/transfer/service of Smith's acquittal recommend, who in the very least did nothing — and even observed as having "taken leave" to side with the rapists. Let's see how Kenney will respond to this — and how she chooses values: her loyalties to her job or to her gender?

Cafe Adriatico

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST WEEK MICK JAGGER'S LAST WORD, "Abe: A Frank Miracle of U. Aguilar Cruz," was launched in Lucy Chai's newest restaurant in the Bay named after his father Abe Dee. The LJC restaurants have come a long way since the original Café Adriatico that made Malate the best weekend place it is today. I still write about the book and its colorful subject in another column, but today memory brings me back to Café Adriatico, the original one on the Adriatico block, Remedios corner Adriatico streets. Today it's a popular place to eat and has earned him a spot in conversation—for friendship, party, people-watching, dates, engagements, frivolous, informal meetings, and sometimes, for dinner, to say our goodbye, it also it a pick-up joint. All things happy and, and in between have happened in that dark corner of the city remembered mostly for the old world ambiance that has always been copied but never quite duplicated.

Café Adriatico's ambiance flowed from the eccentric taste of art and antiques that fill its step space. The downstairs made this dominance the bar and dining area, while the upstairs served as a private function room for the days of the "dining in" era. Agreement for a piece of old wood salvaged from a gate was found. A watch of an museum, and was to be donated to some shop in the Ilustre of Philippine Antiques, a place where one went to when people had the time to scan the mercado checkers or search the gamo's source. The Villa items (VIPs) would be viewed chandelier of thick and grimy origin, of the original Adriatico, and the old chandelier of "Ah" for "quaint"? that was this not wrong.

All this gave back to Chai's novels and, notwithstanding modern conveniences like the microwave oven or air-conditioned rooms, chocolate cake is still delicious from scratch chocolate bath, layered in heavy buna chocolatecake and made barter manually with the wooden mixer at hand. And also a younger generation sometimes wonder for a kinky sex toy. I have often wondered when the cafe will carry, as "courtesy of Chocolate," the chocolate ash or cremations in urns for.

After I had my first chocolate ash, with a wonderfully crunchy cone and mousse sandwich (now no longer the dessert a quarter of a century ago, Café Adriatico occupied only the ground floor of its present structure. It was always merely space and one could hear running footsteps, dressing, and things crashing on the second floor. We would listen to the tiny and tiny everything fell quiet, are amazed to call the police and an ambulance, thinking one or more people were dead upstairs.

Unfortunately, I was not old enough to have appreciated the cafe when it was still to antique shop that owned horseshoe formed coffee and tables and chairs and super leather couches. In early days, Café Adriatico was an antique shop. Before the place is as well, and love tables and leather armchairs, finely stained hardwood tables from the Bicol. Highly aware or even wobbly, the chairs were always an conversation piece with their arms that caught musings or worse, the leather chairs that were so uncomfortable they made patrons' turnover faster because you were too encouraged to linger and renew your drinks. Today the place is lined with what they call in Pampanga "modern antiques."

The place used to be lined with 19th century lithographs and prints depicting scenes from the colonial Philippines. There were many small paintings around, landscapes, cityscapes, and interiors by the Diwalwal Group that included E. Aguilar Cruz, Bernardo Calderon, Rolando F. Mendoza or FMM, and the late Garcia de la Rosa and Andres Cristobal Cruz. The scenes of Philippine folk and religious imagery or scenes by Claude Tupaz are a surprise for people who know him today as a food variety chef and antiquer.

The names used to have small ad tarpaz to provide with glow cigarettes, as well as ghost glass flower pendants that had translucent flowers in those early days, even coffee mugs and plates were made by Jun Bautista whose works are now prized possessions displayed behind glass cabinet that used for food and drink.

Music like the BEC was scheduled and at some point it was possible to tell the passing of an hour from the music playing because they only had one record player and one record. Sometimes there were only played till midnight when the music turned to a playful mixture from converts, and then you knew it was time to go home.

Café Adriatico was the only newsstand of Malate and its guests, we left we it to the past tense. The things can be said about Café Adriatico, which now has a bigger branch across the street. The place is still there, alive and kicking after three decades. The food has changed, the menu has changed, the ambiance has changed, and there is wider range of clients. The space is much larger and the mahogany old world charm is still there, but creeping through memory lane and reminiscing about the past is not the way to go forward and feels the way it does, but also why it was become a place of personal memories for me and to my late parents, some of whom chats that as the classic Adriatico restaurant must have paid for its doors or trade pass.

Christmas is a time for reunion and memory, and the like book launch brought back all times.

(Comments are welcome at aocampo@interaccess.ph)

Corruption's faces

IT SOUNDED ALMOST LIKE A JOKE, BUT I SAY THIS HER SERIOUS. This story he pitched up on one of the Chinese cable channels' newsroom.

A man had choked on a rubber sausage because the vic pus-wise used sucked too far adulterated. His family was furious and brought some symbolic beverages in celebrate. But they stories in revenge were the liquor was adulterated, too, and accomplished.

When the Legislature man had failed to do with the pa-pasan.

My father isn't quite sure if this hap-pened in Taiwan or in mainland China, but his point is that corruption is no laughing matter now that people's lives are being put on the line. Every day now there are reports on Chinese cable television about scams with substandard, sometimes deadly, materials. Just last week, for example, one I heard story time back was about substandard milk powder that killed several children.

The shocking these stories partly to make readers aware some of those cheap imports coming in, especially from China, Inc., which, I might just be right, is the world's biggest consumer of counterfeit goods. But I also wonder if these stories are part of a more insidious campaign to warn that you would probably realize, when the product breaks down after a few weeks, that you've just thrown away money on an expensive toy. I have no doubts that China will eventually produce top-quality durable consumer goods, but right now, production standards are generally low in many industries. Which is why, third world, those already low standards are often ignored because of corruption. I'm afraid many Chinese electronic products are just not durable right now, and some can pose even real risks, for example: Christmas lights that easily overheat and short circuit.

Then there are all those food products, many with the most outrageous health claims. I often check out the stuff on sale in supermarkets to get an idea and hotels, many aren't even worth the packaging. I've heard stories and smell inside, and pass that on to the testers provide some nutrition, considering that many of these products are junk, with too much food, sugar or salt.

Adding on the cause for traditional medicine, we're also getting many Chinese medicinal products with claims of being "organic" or "natural." Again, I'll be very careful here. If you could prove to me that some of these products contain pure powerful and dangerous Western drugs, I've found cold remedies with antipsychosis and antiviruses, and "pain killers" with steroids. There are the "safer" medicines in the sense that they at least have the ingredients printed out. I shudder to think of all the other health products that aren't so scrupulous. Take for example the "herbal" ingredient the production of medicines, including a predilection in the mixing of traditional and "chemical" ingredients, but the corruption's so rampant I'm sure I have been missing.

Acceptable

I started off with Chinese corruption for one small to get an informed thinking of corruption in the Philippines. It's not here, no doubt, but corruption is found everywhere and in adverse consequences have no borders as substandard products or counterfeit drugs made.

But I still want to get now to corruption's faces. The worst type of corruption, I believe, is those of citizens looking elsewhere, operating in dark corners. In reality, and this is what is so terrifying, corruption's many faces are often quite benign, even pleasant. There's the very respectable businessman or businesswoman with desk briefcases and laptops, but who have perfected the art of bribing officials without the need to be paid off. The goods that are dumped here have gone through so many layers of corruption, from the regulatory agencies in China to local customs officials.

We think, too, of corruption, as being confined to "poor" countries like our own. Assigning the borderless dollar numbers of Enron and America's corporate world. Talk about respectable.

We think of Ivy-league buildings packaging sub-standard with powder to solve costly building. But what about those large and/or national companies that court our Department of Health officials with every imaginable perk to ensure the passing and promotion of their formula. It's corruption, too—and of the worst kind—where you bully Third World governments.

Family

Transparency International just came out with their latest annual ratings of corruption in the world, and this year they also released results of a Global Corruption Barometer based on surveys in seven countries. In the Philippines, 1% percent of respondents said they paid bribes in the past 12 months. (Only 36 percent!) though: Bribetaid have been higher.)

Also in the Barometer, the Philippines ranks as having less—including our own. And the scariest? The police. Transparency International said, are the most "vulnerable." "I was quiet to here because it's hard to think of how you bribed somebody at roadblocks. Let the cards speak for themselves. Have you ever been stopped by a traffic officer and told you were going too fast, or, if the last time you were held up by some policeman or traffic enforcer. They can actually be quite amiable, and ever so polite, full of "po" and "na" and "ma'am" so they pull you over to the curb. More "po" and "na" crop up as they assume you of having violated some rule. At some point, you finally ask what you've done wrong. Oh, but don't they look so innocent when they go, "Hoy po . . ."

Psychologists talk about cognitive dissonance as a way of controlling your emotions. You're indignant over the corruption, you pick up a cookie pounded down by fanning at that face and it gets to your mouth, you're overwhelmed by the taste of the cookie, and that's what you have done, you look at that face and you realize how she looks just like many people we love—a child, a sibling, even a parent.

This is what is so disconcerting: it's a battle against time. Do we get to the point where there will be a moral discomfort between the corruption we see and the cookie we eat? And what happens we have in the real world? We can talk our heads off about corrupt politicians but early on, our children will pick up, rightly or so, all the double-standards in homes and offices, around parents and listeners and wars and traffic violations.

I want to end on a hopeful note. I know some national governments agencies and local governments are trying hard to streamline procedures and bureaucracies to cut some of the bureaucrats that invite corruption. I have many friends, too, who are courageous and in social clean-ups. "Swimming" sometimes for a long time against the current, but I'm sure there is a saving sea, in getting to be more renowned or in getting a better journal. It's not easy but we need to think again of how. On we wish someday to find someone we know, publishing with people's lives for a fee, and doing this with so much aplomb, so much gratuitousness!

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The Church's historical role in defending people

LETTERS

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE Philippines, in opposing the continuous assembly, is just being faithful to its tradition of defending the flock against the abuses of the civil authorities. Looking back to the very beginnings of the Church in our land, we discovered how the early missionaries were ordered to defend the people. The following excerpt from the notes of my confrere Fr. Pelayo Reynoldo, an avid scholar of the early history of the Church in the Philippines, shows this.

King Charles V had ordained in the religious and clergy to "have great care and diligence in order that the natives be treated as brothers, unmarried and favored, and not to allow any extortion, robbery or other kind of offense or spiritual force." The Augustinian missionaries warned this commission solemnly. Questions surrounding the just war and coercion—how much valence the justified converts should have—would be a constant source of discord between the civil authorities and the Augustinian missionaries and would haunt their stormy relationship for many years. The early Augustinian missionaries denounced abuses such as the subjugation of the natives by means of war and the collection of unjust amount of tribute by the encomenderos without giving the natives anything in return. But such disputes and disagreements would ultimately lead to fruitful dialogues, resulting in just policy and a consensus reminiscent to both the spiritual and temporal welfare of the natives.

Nowadays, the Church's denunciation of Charter change thrust of the House is "fundamentally illegal and immoral" in substantive for a big sally on Dec. 17, and on reassuring to the people about the hidden agenda of Congress, Mark Said by our beginnings as a Church when the missionaries followed the order to defend the people against the abuses of civil authorities.

The Church is worthy of our support because she has always been consistent in her defense of and motherly care for the downtrodden flock, even to daring critical points of our history as a nation. Moreover, the Church is her fortitude and prudence seen to it that resolute active involved in humanitarian, moral sign of needs to settle differences for the authentic progress of our nation.

—FR. PETER UNÉNO OSA,
San Agustin Convent,
Intramuros, Manila

Delayed SSS benefits and unrecorded contributions

IT WAS HEARTWARMING AND VERY REASSURING to read the Social Security System's "prime release" assuring its members (but it has been doing something for the benefit of SSS members. Let me quote SSS: "We have implemented a revamped of service program that effectively eliminated backlogs in benefits and loans processing. In fact, other loans, which normally take a week to process, now only take two days. On the other hand, retirement applications can now be processed on 15 working days, down from 30 to 45 working days." (PDI, 12/3/06)

Moreover, as a retiree, I find the service of the SSS outstanding also. I filed for retirement benefits on October 2005 but until now have not received an official reply from the SSS except copies of following letter addressed to: Photolina Enterprises-owner Head, Operation Accounting Section-bookkeeper, SSS Quezon City Branch, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Sent by Head, Customer Service Manager, SSS Iloilo, dated 10/24/05, 1/18/06 and 5/9/06.

My case is our specific instance of delayed benefits. Every time I make a follow-up at SSS-Iloilo, people there would urge me to write directly to SSS-Diliman. But then what's the use? If SSS-Diliman cannot act on internal communication, what reason will they have in order to act on my case?

One redeeming factor I have noticed with the SSS is that it responds to inquiries when prodded by the media. This is why I am writing this letter, hoping that the SSS may yet expedite the release of my benefits. And while they are at it, may I ask why my contributions when I was with Republic Biscuit Corporation (RBC) this year and from 1968 to 1971 by the PLI Bank in various capacities from 1972 until I opted for early retirement in July 2000. However, the contributions in my name were not recorded. I submitted to the SSS all the RBC and PLI Bank payslips.

The main idea I want to stress here is a diminished income but fulfilling media of life is hitting me squarely and as for the SSS is of no help. "SSS for agency: Ito ba kasabwan"—what a find!

I hope the SSS people remember my records and release my benefits normally. I have already waited long enough, not just for 15 days, but for more than a year.

—GUILLERMO P. PARREÑO,
Ledesma Street, Pototan, 5000 Iloilo

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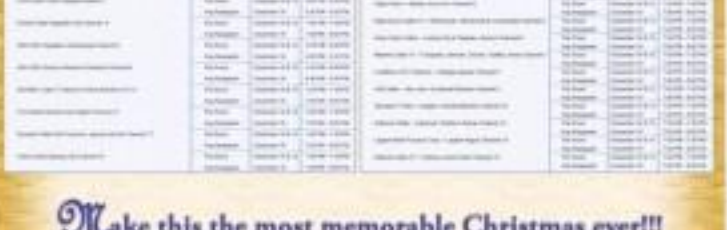

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MY HOPE PHILIPPINES

Catholic Church nixes population control

MANILA MAYOR ROBERTO OUTERTE, IN a speech, reportedly described the Catholic Church's population control program stupid. (PDI, 12/9/06) The fact is the (C)hurch has no such program. Its fact is a family planning program which is essentially different from a population control program. Population control is immoral while family planning is moral. Only God has dominion over human life.

Duterte also said, "Sex is an instinct." But Marriage Encounter's Collegium Document describes sex as "the sum of the functional, functional, behavioral characteristics of living things that are involved in reproduction by two interacting parents and that distinguish males and females." We have to remember that man is a rational animal. As animals we do have instincts and urges, but as man we have intellect or reason and free will, which animals do not have. Moreover, Christians have faith, hope and love. The life of faith, hope and love is supernatural life of Christian life.

Duterte further said: "Artificial ways of preventing pregnancy are not against the (sanctity) of life." Before conception, yes, it is morally to love life on the level of an animal, to submit to nature's natural instincts and urges.

"We do not want unwanted pregnancy," he said. Anglicanism is to make life wonderful the moment we are the end. What we want is more intelligent and Christian people of character who know their status in relation to their creator and Lord.

It is Christ who considers sex as an object of pleasure who interprets and perceive the image of God.

—REV. FR. ROBERTO A. ORBOS, SCJ,
Ste. Niño Parish Church,
Bulakbaw Street,
Bayo Bantay, Quezon City

House has gone down to lowest level of disrepute

THE FIRST MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, meaning the House of Representatives and the Senate, were persons of proven integrity and probity, who were imbued with the highest degree of statesmanship and love of country. They had exemplary moral backgrounds, a substratum of character that has been absent in the halls of Congress for more than 30 years or so.

At no time in the history of the Philippines has Congress sunk into its lowest levels of disrepute, corruption and greed. The present crop of politicians making up the membership of the current Congress is a disgrace to their forebears and Filipino people.

The members of the majority in Congress are like a pack of hyenas feasting in the morsels and subsisting for more pesos, more money and more time in stay in office as "honorable" representatives of the people. Their constituents are dying of hunger, sickness and lack of shelter due to calamities, yet they would rather be lawmakers to push through a pork barrel bill (which is more than P1 billion) for the majority of Filipinos who are already in the throes of hopelessness and despair.

It is worth noting that among those leading these third-hand "representatives" of the people are Jose Villarosa of Camarines Sur and Rafael Lacson of Negros Occidental. Despite their fame in their provinces, their last chose to step in the "hallowed" halls of Congress to fight tooth and nail for the passage of the resolution convening a constituent Assembly. These two stayed away from their starving constituents just to cater to the whims of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia.

—HOOT A. JOAB,
2/F, Bugsley Bros. Insurance Bldg.,
Magallanes St., Intramuros, Manila

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54,000 bags of rice lost to 'Reming'

LEGAZPI CITY—AT LEAST 54,000 BAGS OF RICE stored in National Food Authority (NFA) warehouses in the Bicol region were destroyed and damaged as a result of Supertyphoon "Reming."

Out of those, 17,000 bags were destroyed and declared unfit for human consumption while 37,000 were damaged.

The damaged rice supply was worth P48.5 million, taking into consideration a ceiling price of P18 per kg and 50-kg per bag.

The typhoon's fierce entry the week off the Jamorawon warehouse located in Subano City in Albay, making 22,000 sacks unfit for consumption.

According to Rolmer Rimando, NFA officer in charge in Bicol, the damaged rice, which are no longer fit for human consumption, will be fed on to feed suppliers.

"We are in the process of determining the price so we can bid it off before Christmas," he said.

Another warehouse in Libon, also in Albay was also badly damaged by Reming.

Rimando placed the damage to its infrastructure at P34 million.

He, however, assured the public that there was enough rice supply in the typhoon-devastated region to last for 79 days.

"We have some 264,000 sacks of imported rice stock," he further said.

The rainless period of approximately two-and-a-half months, however, takes into account other players such as private rice mill owners and other rice traders.

"If NFA solely takes care of the rice consumption requirements, the stock is only enough for nine days," Rimando said.

"We are also expecting 320,000 bags of rice supply from Manila," he said.

The region has an approximately daily consumption of 34,000 sacks of rice.

The MIA here, since Reming struck the region, has already released 30,000 bags of rice to the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Office of Civil Defense and the local government units, mostly in Albay and Camarines Sur, "on cash or needs."

Historically according to Rimando, Bicol does not produce enough rice for the 4.6 million people in the region.

Ironically, the region, which has one of the most fertile soils in the country, has to import rice from neighboring provinces such as Quezon and Central Luzon. —Belmo L. Reyes, Inquirer Southern Luzon

AT LEAST 1,000 activist farmers from Southern Tagalog marched on Quezon Avenue in Malacañang to protest a move to amend the Constitution led by allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the House of Representatives. DAVE LOPEZ

Bishop asks LGU execs to join people in rallies

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—LEADERS OF various religious groups in Negros Occidental yesterday challenged local officials to join the people in a prayer rally at the historical public plaza today to express their collective outrage at how the administration-congressmen have "schemed to shelve" the "family and manipulate the numbers with our Constitution."

The Church leaders said that although Speaker Jose de Venecia has announced that the House is giving up its bid to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly, they are now against Charter change by whatever means.

"We need to send a strong message to the powers that be—both the major by block in the House of Representatives and Malacañang, that the people have had enough of these manipulations," said a statement of the Church groups here read by the retired Bishop Vicente Navarra at a press conference Wednesday.

"We want to say that we, the people, hold Gloria Macapagal Arroyo solely accountable for these insidious plot to alter the political order to benefit politicians and not the people. We need to say that the people have lost trust and respect for their leaders," Navarra added.

The statement is being read by the Diocese of Bacolod, the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, the Negros Regional Ecumenical Council, the Negrenses United Against Con-ass, the students, people's organizations and union-oriented groups.

Fr. Ramon Tagud, of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and secretary general of the Protestants of Church People's Hospitals in Negros, said the prayer rally this afternoon should send a strong message to public officials that they should uphold the interest of the people rather than their loyalty to their political parties and Mr. Arroyo.

"If our officials are committed to serve their constituents, they should walk with the people on Friday," he said.

The gathering is not a culmination but the commencement of their protest, the statement read by Navarra said.

"It is not to close an ugly and sordid chapter in our nation's current history today, it is a call and challenge to a new vigilance," he said.

It is also a call to "watch and pray" and to fight any move or attempts to "fool and short-change the people," the statement said.

He said everyone who loves his country and cares for decency and morality in government should stand up and be counted.

Navarra said the congressmen who pushed for Con-ass stand contrary to the welfare of the people and country, and if voters are sensitive to say about time they should think whom to vote for.

The bishop also said he is against any form of Charter change at this time, adding that any talk about a constitutional convention should be taken up after the May 2007 elections.

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RECYCLED CHRISTMAS Children are drawn to Christmas decorations that appear to be brand new, but are actually made of recycled materials. Some enterprising Baguio City residents brought out the new from old materials by transforming them into Christmas decorations.

GSIS wants to take convention center

BACOLOD CITY—THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System revealed the city government on Wednesday that it would reclaim the Negros Convention Center that it bought in 2006 by making P900 million of future revenues from the development of Camp John Hay.

Acting Vice Mayor Leandro Yanguez, who is also acting mayor this week, said GSIS Senior Vice President Renato Saenico named the service's officials during a meeting that was supposed to address the John Hay debts.

Yanguez said the city government may end up defaulting on its obligations by Jan. 3, 2007 because the developers of Camp John Hay suspended payments after it lost its tax incentives in a Supreme Court ruling.

The Fil Estate-owned Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) recently negotiated a new bailout deal with investors to remain the John Hay project, city officials said.

Treasure

The city government earned a 25-percent share from CJHDevco's book sale, which some experts peg at P900 million, according to Thelma Manzano, city treasurer.

The city will fight to keep the center, Yanguez said, because of its historical value.

Former First Lady Imelda Marcos worked for the facility's construction to house the quincentennial world match between then president Ferdinand Marcos and Ananda Kanjawin October 1974.

In 2003, former Mayor Bernardo Vergara struck a deal with GSIS. Technically, the city government already defaulted on its first two payments of P33 million each covering 2005 and 2006, Yanguez said. "The debt triplet by January," he said.

But nothing has been resolved, he said, because representatives of CJHDevco and the Metro Cebu Development Authority (MCDA) have been crashing a series of meetings on since November.

P50M in advance

MCDA advanced P50 million on the city's behalf to activate a tripartite sales agreement forged by GSIS president Winston Garcia and Yanguez.

The city council acted to process a P50 million GSIS loan in November to complete these repairs but was rebuffed due to the John Hay issues.

Sanchez said the city government that week that the GSIS would simply enforce the sales agreement.

The agreement obliges the city to post treasury bonds representing the convention center's P200 million price tag "within 90 days from Feb. 28, 2005... with an interest rate of 12 percent per annum," but Yanguez said the government never pursued this arrangement.

Vergara and Garcia signed a second agreement which authorized BCDA to directly remit the city government's share from the John Hay rent in GSIS between 2006 and 2018.

However, not a centavo has been remitted to GSIS, the agency said. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

White shrimp importation, culture gets go signal

DAGUPAN CITY—FINALLY, THE controversial rumanuel Pacific white shrimp) can be imported and cultured in the country after a "thorough and favorable import risk assessment" conducted during experiments somewhere therein Germany.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap will sign on Dec. 16 a fisheries administrative order (FAO) lifting the prohibition on the importation and culture of rumanuel, previously banned in the country.

The lifting of the prohibition was recommended by Malcolm Bernardo A. Ibarra of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources director and Salvador Salazar, officer in charge of the office of the agriculture undersecretary for fisheries and livestock.

It has been a long road for the rumanuel to the Philippines, which is a species for culture in the country, although hundreds of farmers are clandestinely raising it in different parts of the country, said Mercy Rosario, chief of the Dagupan based BFAR research center.

But he said uncontrolled importation will still be regulated and that the imported brood stock will be strictly screened by the government to ensure that there are disease-free.

The BFAR will also accredit hatcheries for the exotic and high risk species.

The entry of rumanuel to the Philippines has been tough since 2001 when the ban on its importation and culture was imposed.

Despite the prohibition and strict surveillance in airports, traders have found ways to bring the shrimps into the country.

In December 2004, the BFAR entered into an agreement with the Agribusiness World Inc., agrarian group, for breeding of rumanuel at the Dagupan center.

The DA allowed importation only for experimental purposes by government agencies. Yolanda Garcia-Fuentes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Calabarzon cops say STL effective 'jueteng' cover

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—ASSISTING OFficials of the Calabarzon police on Wednesday blamed the operations of the small town lottery (STL) for the sudden resurgence of jueteng operations in "isolated" areas.

A senior police official, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue, said they had monitored several individuals rebriefing lists for STL but were actually sharing the winning bets "to illustrate like jueteng."

He said STL operations had only understated whatever gains the police had in their campaign against the underground lottery.

"Our efforts to stop jueteng for several months were just nuanced. It was really a setback," he told the reporters.

"We lost ten to twenty days, we are being fooled now" he said in jest.

The official said they had also received reports that the operators of the STL themselves were behind the efforts to revive the illegal numbers game.

"Apparently, the operators of STL are not on all cylinders with their earnings from running the state-sanctioned gambling that's why they resorted to cookers," the Inspector source said.

Besides, he explained, any illegal draws held on/after the issue of the STL franchise.

Income down

Quoting intelligence reports, he said the daily earnings of STL operators were 60 percent less than what the maintenance of jueteng usually get.

"As of the operator quota to collect P1 million a day, they stand to lose 900,000 a day. That's a lot of money. Definitely you would want to recoup that in whatever way," he said.

He then detail the area of Quezon province where the franchise of the STL was first issued.

The official said they had suspicions that suspected jueteng operator Cheong Hing Sobre is actually the owner of Hiyasaki Corp., the owner of the STL franchise in the province.

He said because of the sudden drop in bet collection, Highsider had ordered his operators to conduct jueteng draws simultaneous with the STL draws held thrice a day.

"So, that way, they can also use STL as a cover," he claimed.

Another ranking police officer said the issuance of STL franchise only made it difficult for them to arrest jueteng bet collectors and color.

ID's

He said whenever they had police operations on illegal gambling dens, suspected jueteng workers would present identification cards that showed that they were employees of STL operations.

Just last November, police arrested 11 jueteng bet collectors inside a subdivision in Calamba City while in the act of drawing the winning combination for the afternoon session.

The officials said that while arrested, the arrested suspects claimed that the draws was for the STL.

Records said the men pointed to a certain Don Ramon Perez, who runs the STL operations in Laguna, as their boss.

"But, of course, our did not buy their explanation. Because if it was indeed an STL draw, then it should only be held in San Pedro Street (Calamba) in southern Laguna," he said.

The law officials likewise supported the call of the Catholic Bishops Conference of The Philippines (CBCP) for local governments to stop giving out STL franchises.

They said Laguna ex-Representative Dan Ortiz Gon was right in saying that the state-sponsored gambling and jueteng were a "dangerous and insidious pairing."

They said the government could not win the battle against illegal gambling if the STL continued to operate.

Bishop Claro said STL was an effective front for jueteng and called on the government to scrap the lottery which was designed as a replacement for the uniform old game of numbers.

The CBCP also called on officials to reject STL and put a stop to its operations because it was contributing to the decay of moral fibers in communities, making people rely on gambling rather than hard work in earning a living.

Marlon Bernos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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NPA rebels strike back in Bulacan, kill local exec

CITY OF MALOLOS—COMMUNIST REBELS have struck back in the coastal areas of Bulacan province, contrary to a military claim that a series of government attacks has driven them away from this province's mountainous areas.

Residents and local officials said New People's Army rebels wanted to make their presence felt in the province's coastal areas by killing Bayanihan Brgy. Chair of Barangay Alagang here, on Tuesday night.

On Nov. 22, 1st Lt. Larry Padrigo and Cpl. Jessiem Abillo, were killed while another soldier, Sgt. Arnold Tangonan, was wounded in an encounter with 20 heavily armed rebels at Sitio Magbarig in Barangay San Jose in Calumpit town.

On July 18, suspected rebels gunned down Capt. Paul Dominic of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion based in Norzagaray town.

Soldiers from the Army's 7th Infantry Division of the Northern Luzon Command were deployed in the mountainous towns in Bulacan in January as part of an intensified anti-insurgency war in Central Luzon.

Maj. Gen. Ernesto Gomez, head of the 702nd Brigade under the 7th ID, said NPA rebels in Bulacan, particularly those in the coastal towns, moved elsewhere because fishpond operators had stopped giving them "revolutionary taxes."

The attacks came as leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines announced that the NPA was given fresh orders to launch offensives against government targets in the coming days.

"NPA units nationwide will be planning and carrying out tactical offensives [in] the new five-[year] and -month against forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, and their paramilitary adjuncts ...," said Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, in a e-mail statement.

The CPP has called on its members in more than 100 guerrilla fronts nationwide to carry out attacks and join the people's protest against Charter change.

Last week, Malacañang approved a military recommendation not to declare a ceasefire with communist rebels this coming Christmas.

Earlier, the NPA declared a unilateral ceasefire in areas devastated by volcanic mudslides unleashed by Reventador (Abu Sayyaf) to allow its armed units and supporters to conduct "rescue operations."

But it did not say where the ceasefire would be lifted.

The NPA, the CPP-armed wing, is listed as a "foreign terrorist organization" by the United States, along with the movement Abu Sayyaf based in southern Mindanao.

The communist rebels have been waging a 37-year Maoist war to seize power. Gerimelo Reyes, *Inquirer Central Luzon and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Beware of pols, 'Idol' told

LUCENA CITY—WITH the coming election season, relatives and kind-hearted fans of the first Philippine Idol, Marcelito "Mars" Pomoy, have one piece of advice to her: Stay away from politicians.

"Which her own friend-turned-political-propagandist[illegible] I would advise her not to allow herself to be used by politicians," Mars's grandmother, Erlinda Pelayo, told the Inquirer in an interview on Monday.

The Bicolana singer's fans have the same message in the latest singing sensation who rose from coal grove up to this capital city.

Text messages

"Even before the finals in the Big Dome, where she garnered so my grandson, most of the text messages and phone calls from her fans that I received had also advised Mars to shy away from politicians," said Arnel Arilla, host of morning cable TV program "Pag-usapan Natin" (Let's talk it) STV6.

Arilla predicted that politicians would come to dozens to get Mars's support and endorsement in the coming elections.

"It would be good for her to just politely turn them down," Arilla quoted some of the messages of Mars's fans as saying.

"And it would also be better for her to just concentrate on her participation in the upcoming World Idol singing contest next year and learn electronic or professional publication," the host TV broadcaster said.

Support

He said local politicians had originally extended their support to another bevy of candidates, Raymund Bajas.

"In their previous encounters, only the name of Raymund Bajas was written. There was no mention of Mars, probably thinking that she had less chances of winning. But when Raymund was disqualified and she reached the finals, all of a sudden they shifted their attention to her," Arilla said.

He noted that when Mars arrived in the studio for the TV interview, she made a bee-line toward barangay patrol[illegible] assisted by only-[illegible]

But a day after Mars bested the nine other Philippine Idol finalists, Jim Nimo and Gian Magdangal, in the grand finals at the Araneta Coliseum on Saturday and landing recipient of all kinds and others from local politicians strolling her first[illegible] in major highways of the city and in some parts of the province. Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

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Politicians, Bros. Mike, Eddie barred on stage

Front page 1

convening a constituent assembly (Con-ass) after their bid to adopt the parliamentary system through a people's initiative was declared illegal by the Supreme Court in October.

In a month, the Manio leadership backpedaled and shelved the Con-ass plan (Story on Page A13).

Officials threaten rallyists

Morning apprehension, Junior Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Education Secretary Jesli Lapus issued directives reminding government workers and teachers that they were not authorized to attend political gatherings.

"The teachers know what's in the rules," Lapus said.

Politicians yesterday reacted sharply to the police threat. "This is just a prayer rally," said Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. "What's wrong with praying and expressing one's sentiments?"

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president, earlier described the prayer rally as a "call for the purification of reason, for the remembering of the moral forces, for the just ordering of society," the very idea referring to similar activities set to be held in dioceses around the country today.

Tentative schedule

A tentative schedule for Sunday called for the assembly of participants at the grandstand area beginning at 2 p.m. The program starts an hour later with an interfaith invocation, followed by Lagdameo's message and the rosary-led Mass at around 5 p.m.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales will be the main celebrant during the Mass and will give the homily.

As of yesterday, at least 11 other prelates had confirmed their participation—Lagdameo; Manila Auxiliary Bishops Broderick Pabillo and Bernardino Cortez; Bishops Jose Oliveros of Malolos, Gabriel Reyes of Antipolo, Honesto Ongtioco of Cubao, Francisco San Diego of Pasig, Jesse Mercado of Pasaig-san, Deogracias Iñiguez of Caloocan, Antonio Tobias of Novaliches and Antonio Villegas of Baloogs.

The bishops will be joined on stage by representatives from the subsequent and reinstated ministers from the heads of religions in the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, according to Fr Villo.

Not if the proposals will be an elaboration on the purpose of the gathering by Ambi Mahiba, vice president for academic affairs of De La Salle University-Manila.

"The idea is to express the purpose of our gathering through a person who has no political affiliation whatsoever," Fr Villo said.

Velarde takes over

The gathering will be orchestrated by a dramatist of music group dubbed "Pasimula ng Pagbabalan sa Liwanag" (start of unity for the light), she said.

From then on, Velarde will take over for the regular prayer assembly of his El Shaddai televangelist, she said.

Meng. Ardy Quitevis, CBCP spokesperson, said the bishops were pushing through with the prayer rally despite the announcement that Con-ass was officially "dead."

He said the occasion could not yet be turned into a thanksgiving Mass since "we still have so many problems."

"The country is still in shambles because of self-serving politicians," he told the bypress. "The Charter change controversy is just the tip of the iceberg. We're still facing the serious problems of people working on their cars."

Last-minute plea

Administration lawmakers made a last-minute plea for the CBCP to call off the prayer rally, to be attended by a broad range of civil society groups, including pushcart society advocate Nandy Partbon's Ang Supaytos, a nationwide accredited political party.

"As we archive in the vault of forgotten memories today Con-Con-ass resolution, the opposition has lost its excuse to do battle in the streets and it's time to stop these circumstances, roll up our sleeves and get back to work," said House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles. "No more unwelcome speeches on Con-ass."

With reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Michael Lim Ubac, Alexis Romero and TJ Burgonio

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BUSINESS AS USUAL. President Arroyo animatedly leads a round table discussion on energy matters she's hosted with a public uproar and massive street protests over Con-ass over Fri- had already been scrapped.

It's official: GMA jumps off Cha-cha express

Front page 1

announced after the Christmas holidays.

In a news briefing, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the sessions on Charter change (Cha-cha) "are clear the time now not right.

"We can feel it from the pulse of the people," Bunye said. "The President is pragmatic, is realistic. The way things are, the people are not prepared at this time."

A time for everything

Bunye, however, did not reply to questions on what motivated the President to drop Cha-cha after more than a year of preaching the urgency of fundamental reforms.

Asked if the threat of a mammoth rally this Sunday against the Con-ass plan influenced Ms Arroyo's views, Bunye said: "There is a time for everything."

Ms Arroyo had rallied for a "grass debate" on amending the Constitution in her State of the Nation Address in 2005 after weathering the worst political crisis of her presidency that was sparked by the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

Five days later came just a few months after she had endorsed the people's initiative as the best mode to amend the Constitution—a move that was shot down by the Supreme Court in October as illegal and a "gigantic fraud."

A few weeks earlier, she had presided over a series of intimate caucuses with members of the House in Malacañang to map out the strategy to carry out Con-ass that reportedly included payoffs.

Singson warning

In a text message to the bypress, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, also chair of the League of Governors, said: "We would like to commend the President for listening to the voice of the people. We believe that her decision will move the country down to unity."

Singson and other local government officials had met the President in Malacañang last Thursday and advised her to drop Con-ass because it could spark more opposition against her administration.

The President had apparently heeded the warning as well as protests from Church leaders and the Senate as witnessed from Dr Arroyo's announcement postponed on January 29 his group's shift from a Con-ass to a constitutional convention that was also vehemently rejected by Cha-cha opponents.

Ms Arroyo condemned De Venecia and his Cha-cha adherents for their "unreasonable" to withdrawing the Con-ass efforts that led to the confrontation with the Senate and other civil society groups opposed to administration attempts to fast-track Charter change.

De Venecia commended

"I thank Speaker Jose de Venecia and his valiant allies in the House for heeding the voice of national consolidation and unity without sacrificing their high visions of political renewal," Ms Arroyo said.

"It is time to gather together all the energies of our people for the continuing work ahead of maintaining our economic strength, ensuring the social payback of economic reforms and helping distressed communities back to their feet."

Bunye said that the President had spoken to De Venecia about her change of heart but he was adamant. But this was by an innate "interference" on the legislative branch. Bunye also stressed that the President had never recommended any specific mode of changing the Charter.

He said that the President would assess the Cha-cha initiative "at a later time" based on what she "feels as the right timing in accordance with the mode that the people will accept."

Tracking people's sentiments

Christian Monsod, convenor of the multisectoral group Gurlesko formed to oppose Cha-cha, welcomed Ms Arroyo's move. "That's a step forward. They must feel the people don't want it at this time," said Monsod.

Added Senate Senate President Jinkoy Estrada: "She's trying to catch the people's sentiments." *With reports from Christina H. Amoranto, Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora*

Tipon to use Asian Games bonus to build dream home

Front page A1

Iowa Baseball City take away the bantamweight gold medal against host Japan's Aiko Iwashita at the 15th Asian Games Wednesday night.

"But afraid to no responsibilities to us Pinoy lahat? I might not be able to meet this in Tokyo Tipon," he added, singling for gold medal.

Tipon has come a long way since 1999 when, as a 106-pounder, grappling, 5-foot-7 pug, he impressed onlookers during the National Open boxing championships in Baguio City.

Coach Rudolf Velasco watches over 18-year-old Tipon, half the height, long arms and a fighter's heart that would not be pocketed.

Five years later, Tipon won his first big international tournament in Pakistan's Emerald Cup. He followed it up with gold medal performances in last year's Manila leadcoat Asian Games, the International Championships in Thailand and the Vietnam Cup in Thailand.

Beating Olympians

Tipon, who beat "Best Boxer" honoree in Vietnam, an incident he won hands down by beating three Athens Olympians, one of them the defending champion.

"Walking, napping hindi naglo-lose sight! Kaibigan, malaking tulong sa 'yo 'yung [he] speed, kasi kung hindi mo siya mapapatamaan, wala kang mapapala," said Tipon, who looks forward to seeing his wife, Sharida Lee and kids Mikaela Noelle, 3, and Rafael, 2.

Manila City was born in 1972, the year former President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law.

The family shares a one-bedroom house on Lavezares Street in Pasay City.

Tipon recalled the days when young rival knockouts in his school, the Rafael Memorial High School in Talisay, Negros Occidental, terrorized Manila during a golf contest.

Taunts in school

"Sobra na sa kanila, kung hindi ako-ako angalan, sumakan na lang kami. It evened them. I could fight them if they did not stop taunting me," he said.

Jose names from the three were letters of his grandparents' names, Jose and Lina Lim.

In announcing and interpreting the Korean prog, 21-19, Tipon became the second boxer after flyweight Rustico Torres, to take his division to the Games and the third Filipino to bag the gold after billiards player Antonio Gabica in 1966.

On the way to the finals, Tipon outpointed Chinese Taipei's Liu Shih-sung, 25-15, and North Korea's Kim Won-guk, 22-11, before edging Athens Olympics silver medalist Yakupov Bekbosunov in veterans' decision after both fighters ended up locked 23-23.

THE PHILIPPINES' Joan Tipon celebrates his gold medal at the men's 54-kg bantamweight bout at the Asiad Hall in Doha.

THE PACQUIAOS at the Palace with President Arroyo in January after his first win over Erik Morales. Mother Dionisia is at extreme right.

Manny gives ma 'old' car plus driver and security guard

Front page A4

in Las Vegas, his mother Dionisia said she only wanted a car as Indian gift from him.

"Manny, just give me a car," Dionisia told a television station after her son defeated Morales to become World Boxing Council super featherweight champion and won a $1-million ($15-million) purse, aside from percentage shares in pay-per-view telecasts.

On Wednesday, the woman got more than what she had wished for—a Toyota Wish that was only used by Manny's wife, Jinkee Jamora Pacquiao, for errands.

"Thanks, son," a beaming Dionisia said.

Manny also assigned a driver and a security escort to his mother.

Kidnapping threat

Recently, police authorities warned the Pacquiao camp against an alleged plot by a kidnapping syndicate to snatch any member of his family.

Chief Supt. Gennaro Datta, police chief of General Mariano, said the threat was received by intelligence officers. He said police were still verifying the threat but added that Manny should not be in a guard down.

Just ask him

Manny said he was speaking to whoever was planning to harass his family to just ask him if they needed anything. The southpaw is known for his kind-heartedness among associates and in other areas.

Every time Manny returns home after his fight, people would troop to his house. He would always give them gifts, including cash.

Recently, he gave P1,000 to former world boxing champion Rolando Navarrete.

Aside from the car Manny designated the new Mitsubishi multi-cab for use of his driver-bodyguard Jose Jr. and a Lexus GS 300 for his mother's leisure in Lahug and Mango Ave.

SPORTS

NEAR Catalan unleashes a gold-winning kick on Phan Quoc Vinh of Vietnam last night.

Catalan gives RP 4th gold

By Ted S. Molondres, Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—ACCIDENTS WITH IMPUNITY IN BOTH SEASONS, reigning world champion Rene Catalan whipped Vietnam's Phan Quoc Vinh, 2-0, last night to win women's -52 kilogram gold medal, the Philippines' fourth at the 15th Asian Games.

The 28-year-old, three-time Olympian Catalan never allowed the taller but injured Vietnamese to score in the fight as he won, 5-0, in 3:05 rounds.

Catalan's victory, celebrated by about 300 jubilant Filipinos in the gallery, boosted the country's golden output to four, surpassing the three-gold harvest of the national contingent in the 2002 bind in Busan, South Korea.

And it capped a campaign that saw Filipinos score four championships in the last four days.

Edward Dalupang boomed to Catalan's 56, Venlen, 3-0, later in the night and settled for the silver medal in the -70 kg event.

"Somehow for me (also, malaki) ang gold (I fought with everything to nail the gold)," said Catalan, who marched the triumphant finale of billiards player Antonio Gabica in 9-ball singles and boxers Violito Payla and Joan Dipon.

Catalan stands to earn P15 million under the government's sports incentive program. He did not get any cash bonus when he won the -48 kg world title in Hanoi last year.

On the way to the gold, the supremely confident Catalan downed Kyrgyzstan's Ulan Madumarova in the round of 16, 2-0; Lao Phouthong Khamsonthone in the quarterfinals, 1-0; and Yemen's Najl Al Ashwal in the semifinals, 3-0.

"I dedicate this victory to everyone in Iloilo—my family, the President of the Philippines, the wushu federation and the Philippine Sports Commission," Catalan said.

He said his family served as his biggest inspiration during the Games.

"I prepared hard for my opponent, as he is the toughest fighter in this weight division," Catalan said of the 22-year-old from Hanoi who sustained shoulder and leg injuries he sustained in earlier fights.

After losing the first round by just a point, 1-2, Nhlapong was thrown out of the mat twice in the second by the taller and heftier Chinese. The second kill-off sealed the fight for the Filipino.

"He's a lot stronger than I thought," said Nhlapong, a 25-year-old fighter from Bangkok City.

In the most impressive Asian Games show to a time yesterday, the Filipinos had also collected six other silver and nine bronze medals for a total of 18, good for 10th place in the 45-nation competition.

"We showed that we are capable of surpassing ourselves in these Asian Games," said POC chair and chef de mission Wilfrido "Bambol" Ramirez. "As I said, we will win the gold medals in the latter part of the Games."

"All our athletes showed a strong will to fight and be victorious," said Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee. "Hindi lang sila basta nandito, sila ay lumaban hanggang sa huli. (They were not mere participants, they fought to the very end.)"

For the first time in eight rounds, all the chess players obtained the full point as Grandmasters candidate Ronald Dableo, International Master Darwin Laylo and Judoza Doroteo whitewashed the Palestinians, 3-0, in the Olympiad complex.

The win boosted the Filipinos' total to 12 points going into last night's final round. They stood in ninth place, just half a point behind joint third Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Iran and Bangladesh.

Laylo outplayed Anta Tsamera, Dableo whipped Belal Shoukhi and Doroteo downed Shadia Jamaha.

Second Rizal Mahdaly scored 418.48 points in the men's 20-meter platform preliminary and qualified to the finals along with Jaime Sark, who hit 328 with 250.90.

Sharleen Bahit missed the bronze in the women's pairs race to a Thai rider as the cyclists struggled at the Games' tropic rehabilitation.

John Ted Morales figured in a four-man crash in the keirin race and sustained superficial injuries. National coach Jeremiah Lowerre pulled Morales, who set a national record in an earlier race, out of the repechage.

Morales earlier secured top third and last in his semifinal group of the men's sprint with a time of 11.431 seconds.

In rowing, the squad of Hilbredo Veronio Jr., Almario Vizconde and Jordan Victorino Jr. bested the Indonesia, 45-31, before bowing to the Kazakhs, 24-45, in the men's team epee quarterfinals.

Silvester Jerry Angana bowed to 2002 Busan Games champion Shahrul Mamesow of Uzbekistan, 0-3, in the preliminary of the men's 55-kilogram freestyle event and then lost to Japan's Hidenori Ikeda in the repechage, 0-6.

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No place to hide for suspect

UP regents vote today on tuition hike

Studes, faculty to protest at lantern fete, Oblation Run

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A BELGIAN FUGITIVE, WANTED in his home country for child abuse charges, was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in front of the Belgian Embassy in Makati City last week.

Gaspare Leo Van Herke, 61, is currently detained at the NBI jail, according to the bureau's Interpol Division chief Clare de Castro Jr.

Special Investigator Alicia Sequenera Jr. added that Van Herke, described as "an incorrigible abuser of children," had been the subject of an extensive manhunt by the Belgian police.

In 1995, Van Herke was sentenced in three years in prison for sexual abuse of children. He was again convicted last year for the same offense.

Sequenera said they received a tip from the Belgian police that Van Herke was scheduled to visit the Belgian Embassy to sign service's passport on Dec. 8.

Van Herke was arrested as he was about to leave the embassy on the same day, Sequenera said.

By DJ Yap

THE CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSAL to raise the tuition threshold at the state-run University of the Philippines will be decided today.

Protests against the proposal had put a damper on Christmas festivities in the Diliman campus.

University of Student Council (USC) chair Jean Paolo Alfonso called on students and teachers to join the protest, which would include "barricading" the administration building, while the Board of Regents meets to vote on the issue. The proposed 300-percent increase in tuition and miscellaneous fees for new school year's freshmen tops the agenda for the 12-member BOR.

The administration of UP's president Emerlinda Roman might, among other things, to increase from P300 to P1,200 the cost of an academic unit in the Diliman, Manila and Los Baños campuses; and from P200 to P600 in the Visayas, Baguio and Mindanao campuses.

Faculty regent Roland Simbulan said a simple majority was needed for the proposal to be approved, provided there was a quorum.

UP student and faculty leaders heralded the building of the meeting where the university was holding its annual Christmas celebration highlighted by the traditional Lantern Parade and Oblation Run.

In a press conference yesterday, they pointed out most students had gone home or were simply looking forward to enjoying Christmas.

But the groups, led by the USC and the offices of the student and faculty regents, will planned to hold a protest and demand the junking of the proposal.

Alfonso said the Lantern Parade would feature protest banners. The Oblation Run, which features a run around the campus by male members of a fraternity, would also protest the proposal and move to amend the Constitution, Alfonso added.

He compared the administration's campaign to implement the tuition increase to the failed bid of members of the House of Representatives to amend the 1987 Charter through a constituent assembly.

The administration said the increase would help improve UP's financial viability, considering that the rates had not been adjusted since 1989.

Officials also said the increase would not affect indigent students as the revised Socialized Tuition Financial Assistance Program would ensure they would not pay tuition and would receive stipends of up to P12,000 per semester.

Bernas also promised more student assistantships and scholarships for poor but deserving students through the help of government institutions and the private sector.

Among members of the BOR, only Simbulan and student regent Kelly Jesse Sanchez have publicly expressed opposition to the proposal.

Simbulan said that resistance to the administration's claim, many students would still bear the burden of the tuition hike, since only a few of them would be included in the lowest STFAP bracket.

"Students who don't pay (in this) now will have to pay under the new STFAP scheme," he said.

Simbulan added that the university would lose its character as a state university once it imposes the tuition hike.

"It will pave the way for the UP to become a private university with scholars," said Judy Taguiwalo, president of the All-Education Employees Union.

Free legal services for policemen

By Nancy C. Carvajal

MALABON CITY POLICEMEN can now avail of free legal services in case charges are filed against them in the line of duty, the city's top police official said.

"Like anyone else, policemen also need protection from anyone but this they do not have to spend for because it would be provided to them for free," Inspector Jesus de Jesus told the Inquirer yesterday.

De Jesus said the Malabon policemen would be the first law enforcers in the country to have their own lawyer holding office inside their headquarters, making legal assistance available to them all hours of the day.

He said the Integrated Bar of the Philippines had entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Philippine National Police to provide the services of its members to policemen who had been dragged in the line of duty.

Because of the paperwork involved and the sheer number of policemen seeking legal help it usually takes time before requests for lawyers are granted.

In almost all cases, accused policemen had to spend their own money to get a lawyer to defend them, De Jesus said.

"It is a burden to a policeman especially those who are wrongly accused," he added.

Apart from legal assistance with official and personal cases, De Jesus said the legal office would also act as coach and advisor to policemen who have to testify in courts.

Police confirm bomb planted in Jaworski's van

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AN IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE device caused the blast that destroyed Fanny Ong, Rodrigo "Dodot" Jaworski's Toyota Innova on Tuesday.

This was confirmed yesterday by the task force investigating the case.

Bomb residuals on metals gathered from the explosion site by personnel of the Bomb Data Center in Camp Crame were positive for nitrate, an ingredient for explosive devices, according to Philippine police chief Senior Supt. Francisco Uymatiao Jr.

"Our scene of the crime operatives described the bomb as some explosive," he told the Inquirer yesterday.

Jaworski had lost some front teeth in the explosion that killed Ong, his wife, and injured his brother Ilyas, who was driving the 6-month-old Toyota Innova, and bodyguard Boboy Jimenez rushed out of the car after hearing "something explode."

A few moments later, the vehicle was consumed by flames.

Investigators said the improvised bomb was planted under the front passenger seat. Earlier, they found a hole in the seat caused by the explosion.

The right side of the vehicle's chassis was also damaged.

Chief Supt. Lutin Tricon, Baclaran Police district director, said witness could also be found in malls here, Binondoon, Subic or even Boracay.

But he confirmed that the explosive that nearly killed Jaworski was caused by chlorate.

Uymatiao said the investigating team was working with four witnesses who were in the area when Jaworski pushed his car when he went to the valet, to identify the suspects.

DINOSAURS AT BAYWALK
A favorite subject for both amateur and professional photographers are these dinosaur statues at the Baywalk along Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

Psychic helping police solve murder of lawyer, son

By Jocelyn R. Uy

POLICE ARE SEEKING THE HELP even of psychics as they continue to hunt a blank wall in the investigation of the murder of lawyer Isidorio Guanzon Benitez Bellicrdi-Jr. and his 22-year-old son Brendan.

Mystery

"We are doing our best to solve the case. We have also sought the assistance of psychics in solving the mystery," Southern Police District director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosario told reporters yesterday.

The Bellocillos were on their way to Benitez's office in Makati City last Dec. 8 when two armed men shot them at close range.

Work-related?

The Paranaque police and the National Bureau of Investigation said earlier the killing would be work-related.

At a press conference yesterday, Rosales and his colleagues from Camp Crame had introduced him to a psychic, whose name was withheld for security purposes.

The psychic volunteered to help solve the case, asking for police clearance for his services.

"I was asked to give the name and birthdate of the victims," Rosales said.

TV shows

He accepted the offer after having seen on television how the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States was assisted by psychics and clairvoyants in crime detection and investigation, he added.

Foreign intelligence and police agencies have resorted to top people with psychic capabilities for help in resolving puzzling crimes.

Names

Rosales said the psychic had already provided names that could help identify the gunmen and his location.

Leads

He said the information would be compared to results of the investigation conducted so far through conventional means.

"The psychics' findings would just help provide the leads. We still rely on the usual fact-finding. But it would be helpful if the psychic's information corroborate our investigations," he said.

Double time

Meanwhile, Paranaque City police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles said they were working double time to capture the killers.

Estilles said the Benitez's secretary that five witnesses were ready to identify the suspects.

MetroBriefs

PWU honors Korean educator today

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University will confer an honorary degree on Yun Il-lya, president of the Far East University of Seoul, Korea this special graduation commencement today at the Gonzalo Beltran Hall, 5:30 in the afternoon. Manila Chief Ch. Carlito S. Perez of the Commission on Higher Education and PWU chairperson Dr. Helen Z. Benitez will lead the conferment. Drs. Antonette, president Dr. Jeanbell P. Perez, administrator vice Dean Dr. Manuel Jr. to will read the citation. The Far East University ranks number one among Korean universities in the develop. input of asylee-based program for students.

ART OF FIREFIGHTING
A rainbow is formed from water mist as firefighters, covered in arctic insulation, fight a fire in a vacant house on Cleveland's east side Dec. 13.

Illegals targeted in US crackdown on stolen IDs

WASHINGTON—HOMELAND SECURITY Secretary Michael Chertoff on Wednesday announced a broad new plan to crack down on illegal immigrants who steal the identities of U.S. citizens to get jobs. The strategy, he warned, would likely have economic consequences for the industries that rely heavily on illegal workers.

The announcement came one day after federal agents swept into Swift & Co. meatpacking plants in six states and arrested nearly 1,300 workers, almost 10 percent of the company's workforce, in what Chertoff called one the largest workplace crackdowns on illegal immigration.

Of the 1,282 workers detained, 65 were charged with identity theft or other crimes, officials said. The rest face administrative charges for being in the United States illegally and will likely be deported. The company, which cooperated with the government, was not charged with any criminal or civil violations.

Chertoff said the workers used the stolen identities of hundreds of US citizens to get to Swift & Co. that they were allowed to work in the United States. And he warned that he intended to aggressively pursue document theft rings and the illegal immigrant workers who use them, even though he acknowledged "when we remove the illegal workers, there's going to be some kind of a slowdown."

The move sent shudders through the nation's businesses because Swift & Co., the world's second largest processor of fresh beef and pork, had tried to weed out illegal workers and had relied on a federal program designed to help employers detect false identity documents. Chertoff acknowledged Wednesday that the program, known as Basic Pilot, is unable to detect authentic identity documents that have been stolen.

In a statement, Swift & Co. executives said the raids had limited the company's temporarily suspend operations on Tuesday at locations in Texas, Colorado, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa and Utah. They said totals resumed Wednesday, but they warned that production was expected to fall "below normal levels in the short term."

New York Times News Service

Circumcision lowers AIDS risk, says study

CIRCUMCISION APPEARS TO REDUCE A man's risk of contracting AIDS from heterosexual sex by half, US government health officials said Wednesday, after stopping two clinical trials in Africa because circumcision was working so well that continuing trials would be unethical.

AIDS experts immediately hailed the finding, and the directors of the US and international funds for fighting the disease said they would now consider paying for circumcisions.

"This is very exciting news," said Daniel Halperin, an HIV specialist at the Harvard Center for Population and Development, who has argued in scientific journals for years that circumcision alters the spread of AIDS in the parts of Africa where it is common.

The investigators' results are thought to be more susceptible because the underside of the foreskin is rich in Langerhans cells, sentinel cells of the immune system, which attach easily to the human immunodeficiency virus, which causes AIDS. The foreskin also often suffers small tears during intercourse.

But experts also cautioned that circumcision is no cure-all. It only lessens the chances that a man will catch the virus; it is expensive compared to condoms, abstinence or other methods; and the surgery has potential risks if it is performed by inexperienced or dirty blades, or other happens in rural Africa.

The two trials, conducted by researchers from universities in Illinois, Maryland, Canada, Uganda and Kenya, involved only 5,000 circumcised men in Kisumu, Kenya, and nearly 5,000 in Rakai, Uganda.

AFP

Car bombings, shootings kill 37 across Iraq

BAGHDAD — IRAQI LEADERS discussed the latest in a long line of new security plans for Baghdad on Wednesday as bombs and shootings killed 37 people across the country in the run-up to national unity talks.

Multiple car bombs in Shiite districts and a truck bomb in the north targeting Iraqi soldiers guarding oil pipelines claimed 29 lives alone during another violence-torn day.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki told a visiting delegation of US legislators led by Arizona Senator John McCain that his government had a new security plan to protect the capital and the rest of the country.

The government requires "more arms for the Iraqi army, more power and training in order to be capable of handling security missions all over the country," he told the delegation, his office said.

Maliki's National Security Adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie told journalists the new plan involved a further transition from US troops to Iraqi forces.

All forces would move to the outskirts of the cities to counter al-Qaida insurgents, while the Iraqis would handle the raging sectarian conflict inside Baghdad, quote.

"The coalition forces should not get involved in sectarian violence — this is a job for the Iraqi security forces to do," he told CNN.

With latest polls indicating that only 15 percent of Americans believe the war can be won, President George W. Bush is under pressure to change the course of the United States' three-and-a-half year old adventure in Iraq.

On Tuesday, the White House said Bush would unveil a new Iraq strategy in January, but Rubaie's announcement before the change may already be under way.

However, many people in Iraq fear the result of an overly swift transition to Iraqi forces, especially since many are believed to have already taken sides in the sectarian conflict raging across the capital.

US spokesperson Major General William Caldwell said American forces would remain in advisory with Iraqi forces to train them and, more importantly, ensure they remain neutral.

"Their real purpose is to provide leadership, mentoring and coaching, but they in fact will be able to observe what we call professionalism to make sure the Iraqis are not acting in a sectarian manner about," he said.

As part of the transition, more and more US combat forces would be turned into transition teams accompanying Iraqi forces, he said, citing recent successes in northern Iraq.

Ultimately however, Caldwell hinted that more effort was needed by Iraqi political leaders to stem the violence.

"Until that political process gets more engaged, we are not going to see a rise in the levels of violence," he said. AFP

IRAQIS gather around a vehicle destroyed in a car bomb blast in Baghdad's Shiite slum of Sadr City, Iraq, Dec. 14.

Army sacks grandson of Pinochet over remarks

LATE CHILEAN DICTATOR AUgusto Pinochet's grandson has been discharged from the army because of his remarks defending the 1973 military coup that brought his grandfather to power, army commander General Oscar Izurieta said Wednesday.

"He was told about his very serious fault and that he was being discharged," said Izurieta.

At Pinochet's funeral on Tuesday, Augusto Pinochet Molina, 33, praised his grandfather for overthrowing the elected Socialist government of president Salvador Allende in an army uprising rather than through elections.

His comments drew outrage from the Socialist government and President Michelle Bachelet, who along with her mother and father was tortured under the Pinochet regime, on Wednesday called for the army to punish him for his error.

"This is a grave error and we are certain that the army will know what to do," Bachelet said earlier Wednesday.

Izurieta made the announcement shortly before presiding over a graduation ceremony for army officers which Bachelet was also expected to attend.

The ceremony was held at Iquique's military School where Pinochet's funeral took place and where his grandson made his controversial remarks. It is also linked to many criticisms of the judges who were after his grandfather for alleged human rights violations and fraud during his 1973-1990 regime.

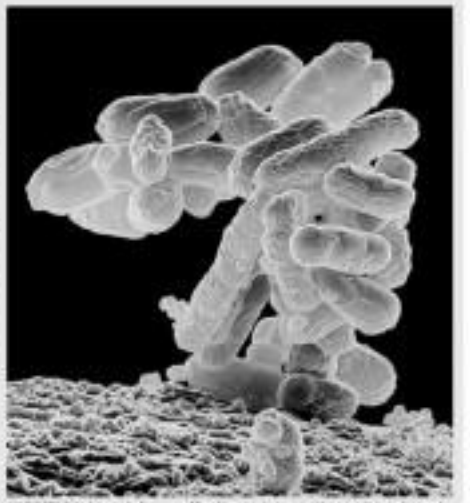
Pinochet died on Sunday one week after suffering a heart attack and two weeks after his 91st birthday.

"He was a man who dedicated all the height of the Cold War the Marxist model, which tried to impose an totalitarian model not by vote, but more directly by force of arms," Pinochet Molina said at the funeral.

He also said that in his late years Pinochet and his family had been humiliated by judges "who were working more hand-in-hand with parties." That statement drew an immediate condemnation from Defense Minister Vivianne Blanlot, who attended the days as the official government representative after Bachelet had rejected a state funeral for Pinochet.

After Bachelet urged such punishment from the military establishment, Pinochet Molina's father told a radio station that his son was thinking of leaving the military voluntarily.

The controversy over Pinochet Molina's remarks underscored the sharp divide which remains in Chile three days after Pinochet, who ruled Chile with an iron hand from 1973-1990. AFP



AFP ELECTRON micrograph of a cluster of E. coli bacteria is shown in this undated photo. Renewed confusion surrounding the source of an E. coli outbreak linked to Taco Bell will mean it's harder for the restaurant chain to reassure customers that its food is safe.

Fast colon exams miss cancer signs

HOSPITAL—DOCTORS WHO scan quickly examine a colon for early signs of cancer miss more than half the abnormalities, a study of 2,603 patients undergoing their first colonoscopy showed on Wednesday.

In the test, doctors threaded a flexible lighted tube with a camera at the end—called a colonoscope—through the colon, and then pulled back slowly to look for problems.

The researchers found that when a doctor typically took less than six minutes to withdraw the tube, the chance of detecting an abnormality fell to 11.8 percent, down from 28.3 percent among doctors who took more time.

And of the nine cancers found to mean that none showed up the study only one was discovered by a doctor who typically took less than six minutes to scan the colon. Experts have suggested that six minutes is the minimum withdrawal time necessary for a thorough exam.

The research in The New England Journal of Medicine was an opportunity to assess, under everyday conditions, the performance of colonoscopies, which are increasingly common thanks to their ability to dramatically reduce the risk of dying of colon cancer.

"Our study suggests even taking a small amount more time would translate into more polyps (found) and potentially more important polyps that have a higher risk of developing into cancer," chief author Robert Barclay told Reuters.

The study, which involved Barclay's private practice, Bartlett Gastroenterology Associates in Bartlett, Illinois, found that the doctor who took three minutes for a typical examination just one adenoma—a lump on the colon lining that might become cancerous—in 6 percent of cases.

The specialist who usually took about 17 minutes found 10 times accuracy advanced. Reuters

Chinese tycoon buys most expensive Rolls

HONG KONG—THE MOST EXpensive Rolls-Royce super-luxury car ever made has just been sold to a Chinese property developer in Beijing, the legendary marque's chief has Robertson said Thursday.

The $2.2 million built-to-order stretch Rolls-Royce Phantom boasts some of the art gadgets including an LCD entertainment system. It also has rear seats of rear seats, facing each other.

"It was the most expensive car we've ever done," said Robertson, in Hong Kong for the unveiling of a fleet of 16 new Phantoms at the city's Peninsula Hotel.

Robertson wouldn't disclose the name of the buyers.

China has overtaken Japan as Rolls-Royce's biggest Asian market, with sales growth this year of 60 percent driven by the country's nearly 6th entrepreneur splashing out on the trappings of wealth. AFP

A "FUTURE LADY" hood ornament on a new Rolls-Royce Phantom.

Rumsfeld ends 50 years of service in ignominy

WASHINGTON—Donald Rumsfeld seems to be in a hurry to resign as Defense Secretary. Donald H. Rumsfeld.

He began to write his own history well before his pending departure as defense secretary with what has amounted to a series of farewell tours and parting interviews, drawing together a career in public service that spans half a century.

Others began writing his history even earlier, and it is harsh, thanks to them.

Ex-generals lamented he was a failure; cartoons that he encouraged service became unbearable, an extraordinary airing of protest. There came a chance from Democrats and some Republicans for President George W. Bush to show the door to a man who served three presidents. Back to Richard Nixon, Rumsfeld leaves the Pentagon on Monday after nearly six years on the job.

Boldly or not, he is the public face of a war gone bad.

The phrase's knocks against him are that he resisted sending enough troops to Iraq, that he was in denial about the likelihood—and then the existence—of an insurgency after Saddam Hussein was brought down, and that he threw out a war plan and went with a flawed one.

"I think his epitaph will be 'I don't care,'" said Anne Lopez, a foreign policy analyst with the libertarian Cato Institute. "Rumsfeld's one-line epitaph will be, 'The man who was at the helm of the Defense Department and supported what was incompetent to win a war in a national tragedy.'"

Rumsfeld was hardly alone in a national security apparatus that did not see the ferocity of the Iraqi insurgency coming, and prepare for it. Here then under his superpower.

"He was the primary architect of the war plan," said military analyst Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution. "He was no scapegoat. He deserves the blame he received."

Rumsfeld and square pursuit, Rumsfeld is also—exactly in an old-fashioned way, one of the qualities that many him seem like a man from a different age. He is given to exclamations like "by golly" and "my goodness."

In '54, Rumsfeld, a former Navy aviator, is the oldest defense secretary in US history. He became the youngest one to history when for he gave his first stint as defense chief in 1975. He is the only person to have held the position twice.

Now, he will fail 10 days short of becoming the longest-serving ever, a distinction held by Vietnam-era failure E. McNamara, who left under a cloud of another war gone wrong.

In the height of his power and popularity, Rumsfeld stirred the public with his expansive was brinkmanship, exhibiting an outsized personality that seemed all of a piece with the bold strokes of a military one-three rolling up successes in Afghanistan and Bombay.

RUMSFELD

He could be dismissive. "Life's hard," he said when members of Congress complained that he did not give due regard to their concerns. But he could choke up over the sacrifice of the troops.

He seemed to be thinking out loud, in public, a startling thing for anyone in public life in Washington to do.

He would think out loud about how Dionne his Cuban might escape, which he did.

Then he would put himself in the mind of a terrorist, imagining what must go through a KIRO's head in deciding whether to keep killing or do something else.

"It's when a person gets up in the morning and says it's not worth it," Rumsfeld assured. "I've either dead or I'm wounded or there is no place to go or I don't have food, and I can't get anyone on the telephone, and I don't have access to the net."

It turned out insurgents in Iraq decided it was worth it.

The toll to date is 2,959 US military personnel dead, and Iraqi getting up in the morning to the near certainty of bloodshed that will kill thousands of women or men by the end of the day.

Beyond the loud curbs under and around him, Rumsfeld finishes his service with few defenders. To those who opposed the war on course to be against it, he is one among many who deserve his blame. "He can't vote either, among those who continue to believe the war was just.

"They will argue the decision to invade was a good one, the fault document was missed, but Rumsfeld executed. Dr. Rumsfeld doomed the enterprise," Lopez said.

In sticking up what he hopes new Defense Secretary Robert Gates will bring to the job that Rumsfeld did not, military analyst Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute mischaracterized.

"Donald Rumsfeld liked to carry a list of priorities in his pocket," Thompson said in a correspondent on the defense dual. "There were 10 of them, and they were very ambitious—items like 'transform the armed forces' and 'optimize intelligence capabilities.'

"Unfortunately, 'items to get along with Congress' wasn't one of them. 'Treat the officer corps with respect' wasn't either," Thompson said. AP

A HEINER of the Bushmen community listens proceedings inside the court in Lobatse, Botswana, Dec. 12.

Court: Bushmen have right to return to Kalahari

LOBATSE, BOTSWANA—FIFTY dweds of San Bushmen were wrongly forced from their Kalahari desert homeland and should be allowed to return to their ancient hunting ground, a court in Botswana ruled Wednesday.

In a majority verdict, a panel of three judges ruled the Botswana government "had not acted reasonably when setting off vital supplies to the Bushmen in the Kalahari desert but had failed to hold adequate consultations with them before, forehand and had no right to refuse gainly deny them permission to return.

Lawyers for the Bushmen reacted to the verdict with delight, saying their years-long battle for justice had been finally vindicated after presiding judge Managing Dibodes delivered the verdict in the city of Lobatse.

"Prior to Dec. 31, 2002, the applicants were in possession of the land which they lawfully occupied in the CKGR (central Kalahari game reserve)," Dibodes told the court.

"The applicants were deprived of such possession forcibly or wrongfully and without their consent."

The government subsequently refused to allow the Bushmen a permit to return to their land "is unlawful and unconstitutional," the judge added.

Since a group of around 200 to Gaborone Bushmen first filed an application in April 2002 challenging their eviction from a game reserve, the case has become a court celebrity with the applicants gathering the backing of celebrities including Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu and film star Colin Firth.

The case was thrown out on a technicality but the high court agreed in 2004 to hear the complaint.

The Bushmen maintain they were driven out of the Kalahari to make way for diamond mining, a claim the world's top diamond producer has denied.

Once numbering millions, roughly 100,000 San are left in southern Africa, with about half of them—40,000—in Botswana. AFP

TV REPAIRMAN IN SPACE
Space shuttle Discovery astronaut Robert L. Curbeam, Jr. prepares to replace a faulty television camera on the exterior of the International space station during the mission's first of three planned sessions of extravehicular activity (EVA), Dec. 11. ■

UK PROSTITUTE MURDERS

Police study clothing

LONDON—BRITISH POLICE were examining items of clothing on Thursday for possible links to the murders of five women, as the mother of a prostitute killed 14 years ago said she would have been the serial killer's first victim.

A massive manhunt is underway across the eastern English port town of Ipswich after the discovery of five naked bodies.

Detective Chief Superintendent Stewart Gull said police would on Thursday reveal the results of a post-mortem examination on one of the victims and hopefully her identity.

A second body was still being examined. Police said they feared the two were more corpses discovered on Tuesday may be of prostitutes who had been reported missing.

Paula Clennell, 26, has not been seen since Saturday and Annette Nicholls, 29, has been missing for at least a week.

Detectives have confirmed that three of the dead women were working.

Gull said clothing had been found in different locations across Ipswich. "We will now take our time to analyse that and see if it is of any relevance," he told BBC News.

"Clearly we are still looking for confirmed sightings of where the girls were and what they were actually wearing."

One woman still working the streets in Ipswich's red-light district was quoted in several newspapers as saying she saw the killer's third victim, Gemma Adamson, being abducted last Thursday in a blue BMW.

"If [the BMW] went into the car park and Anneli came up to it and got out and drove out," the woman, named simply as Lou, was quoted as the Daily Telegraph as saying. "The driver was chubby with glasses and dark hair."

A police spokesperson was not immediately available to comment.

In a [sadder note], Lin Pearman, whose 15-year-old daughter Hayley was murdered in 1992, told the Daily Mail there could be a link to the latest spate of killings. Brothers

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

US, UK may enforce Darfur no-fly zone

WASHINGTON—THE US AND BRITAIN ARE considering enforcing a no-fly zone over Sudan's war-torn Darfur region if the Khartoum government does not allow a UN-led peacekeeping force in, the State Department said Wednesday.

Bush raised the no-fly zone option during a meeting here last week with UK President George W. Bush and amid growing frustration with Sudan's refusal to comply with past agreements on the peacekeepers' deployment, department spokesperson Sean McCormack said.

"Prime Minister Blair talked about it as an idea," McCormack said of the no-fly zone, which would aim to halt the use of Sudanese government planes and helicopters to support attacks on villages in Darfur.

He said Bush was very concerned about a resurgence of violence in the vast western Sudanese region, where more than 200,000 people have been killed and 2.5 million displaced during nearly four years of fighting between ethnic African rebels and militia allied to the Arab-led government in Khartoum.

"The president is going to consider what options he thinks are necessary in order to address the grave situation there," McCormack said, adding that the move to consider tougher measures was motivated by a "lack of forward movement on the diplomacy right now combined with an uptick in violence" in Darfur.

The Financial Times reported earlier Wednesday that Blair had urged Bush to take coercive steps against Khartoum and that options under consideration by the US administration included air strikes and a naval blockade—measures advocated by some human rights groups and Senior US officials.

McCormack said the newspaper report was "way out ahead" of any actual planning for military action and insisted that "our focus right now is on diplomatic means." But if the violence continues and Sudan persists in its refusal to implement peacekeeping agreements, "then of course the international community has to consider other options," he said.

"The violence has to stop and the humanitarian situation needs to be addressed," A US- and British-led push for military action in Muslim Sudan less than four years after the invasion of Iraq could face significant opposition from Arab states and in the UN Security Council, where China—which buys most of Sudan's oil—holds veto power.

Dan 120 resolutions on Darfur have included provisions barring Sudan from using its military aviation in the region, though they did not explicitly allow for imposition of a no-fly zone.

Bush's special envoy to Sudan, Andrew Natsios, met with President Omar al-Bashir in Khartoum Wednesday and said the two had agreed on steps "that may make some progress" in improving security in Darfur. AFP

WILL, SHE THINKS IT'S COOL
A demonstrator who identified herself as Rachel watches a mock crucifixion to protest discrimination against people with tattoos in Mexico City, Dec. 13. She complained of suffering discrimination because she had decorated her back with scarification, ejections of decorative scars made with a scalpel. AP

Video shows Dodi getting 'Diana ring' before crash

PARIS—AN EXCLUSIVE BROADCAST SE-heard a video Wednesday which it said showed Dodi Al-Fayed picking up an engagement ring for Diana, Princess of Wales, just hours before both died in their 1997 Paris car crash.

TF1 a letter to AFP, which obtained a copy of the video, the jewellery company Repossi said it was making the images available after receiving authorization from Mohamed Al-Fayed, Dodi's wealthy father who has long insisted darker motives were behind the car accident.

Repossi said it had not previously released the surveillance video on the advice of its lawyers, but did not elaborate.

The move came a day before the publication of a British report which is expected to confirm French findings that the couple's death was accidental, refuting speculation supported by Mohamed Al-Fayed that Diana and his son might have been killed by British intelligence.

The washed-out, black-and-white video, which was timestamped Aug. 31, 1997, showed a man resembling Dodi Al-Fayed entering Repossi's upscale Place Vendôme boutique in central Paris, which neighbors the Ritz Hotel owned by Mohamed Al-Fayed.

The man entered at 5:01 p.m., according to the timestamp, and stayed a total of seven minutes. During that time he can be seen examining trays of jewellery pulled out of a case and placed on a table. At the end of his visit, he seems to pick something up off a table and then leaves.

In the early hours of the next morning, Aug. 31, Dodi Al-Fayed, 42, and Diana, 36, were killed, fleeing paparazzi through the middle of Paris.

Henri Paul, the driver of the Mercedes provided by the Ritz, whose duty had been relaying, lost control of the car and it smashed into a support pillar at around at high speed.

Repossi on Tuesday issued a statement saying Dodi Al-Fayed had inspected engagement rings in its Monaco branch earlier August 1997 and had "wanted the ring to be ready by Aug. 30, 1997, at the latest." It said "Dodi Al-Fayed went to the Repossi boutique on the Place Vendôme to collect the engagement ring, which came from the 'Eye Me' collection, to give it to Princess Diana." It said that, as well as the security video, it had proof of the purchase in the form of a receipt. Both pieces of evidence had been given to legal authorities who investigated the subsequent car crash, the jeweller's said.

The French probe concluded that the Ritz driver was to blame for the accident because he was drunk, high on prescription drugs and driving too fast.

Diana married Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, in July 1981 and was a hugely popular member of the royal family. The couple separated in December 1992 and divorced in August 1996.

Mohamed Al-Fayed claims Diana and his son were killed on the orders of the British establishment to prevent them marrying. AFP

SPORTS

E-mail: sc.sports@inquirer.com.ph
Color Tuldyvis S. Melendres

(QAH Tipon runs with the Philippine flag after winning the boxing bantamweight crown over Korea's Han Soon-chol.

Tipon unable to recognize GMA's voice

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—ESTHER JOAN Tipon's ears were still ringing from the grateful roar of his countrymen on his victory lap just seconds in.

Tipon never really heard the voice on the other end of the line.

Beijing's bantamweight gold medalist at the 15th Asian Games was being whisked away by circuit volunteers in orange track suits when a man he didn't know handed him a mobile phone.

"... wants to congratulate you ... GMA ..." said the man, in so other roar drowned the rest of what he was trying to say.

Tipon pressed the phone against his right ear but just couldn't hear a thing except the noise at the arena. Then he handed the phone back to the man, thanked him and disappeared into the dressing room.

Five hours later, over a dinner of Filipino delicacies at a shopping mall restaurant, a proud Manny Lopez, the head of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, described how wildly deserving Filipino fans cheered Tipon to victory.

He also said news of the country's second boxing gold reached

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2006 ASIAN GAMES MEDAL TALLY

Nation	G	S	B	Total
China	147	79	61	287
South Korea	58	52	74	184
Japan	49	65	73	187
Kazakhstan	20	17	33	70
Thailand	12	15	32	59
Iran	12	14	18	44
India	9	9	21	39
Taiwan	8	12	28	48
Uzbekistan	8	11	17	36
Qatar	8	3	4	15
Malaysia	6	10	20	36
North Korea	6	7	15	28
Bahrain	5	4	7	16

Nation	G	S	B	Total
Philippines	4	11	10	25
Hong Kong	4	10	14	28
Saudi Arabia	4	5	13	22
Myanmar	3	4	7	14
Kuwait	2	3	4	9
Turkmenistan	2	2	5	9
Singapore	1	5	6	12
Afghanistan	1	2	1	4
United Arab Emirates	1	1	2	4
Indonesia	1	0	1	2

Bowlers brace for brickbats

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—RECUPERATIVE ARE SO...

An official of the RP delegation here said most bowlers are already preparing concussion-spread serious officials of the team and the PBC. He declined to elaborate.

The bowlers, the only squad in the RP contingent with a full complement of players, failed to win a single medal...16 were ranked in the sport...in the events in both the men's and women's competitions.

It was a stunning letdown for a one-time dominant that included reigning world singles champion Biboy Rivera, "Bowler of the Century" Paeng Nepomuceno, former World Cup champion CJ Suntay, Manila bowlband Asian Games monsters gold medalist Marlusna Tee and former world women's stars champs Lizzi Ala Pesanta, Cecilia Yap and Lita Dimalen.

The other members of the team were Jesse Garcia-Bautista, Jojo Cuasay, Marlusna Dave Wondai, Yvesse Dangcon-a and Cheslie King.

"They told (the) truth somewhere," said the official who also lived to be named.

Salonga to 'float' as Asiad closes

LEA SALONGA'S STAR WILL BE AS BRIGHT as the athletes when the 15th Asian Games closes today in an ambitious outdoor fireside show, according to the highly diana, guided production director of the Doha Asiad organizing committee.

Before David Atkins, also the creative mind behind the spectacular opening ceremonies, said the 90-minute farewell extravaganza will feature Salonga floating on a cloud as she sings "A Sample of the One," a stirring ballad written as a tribute to the athletes of the Doha Games.

Atkins kept the closing show under wraps until Wednesday.

Salonga, who shot to fame in the world premiere of the London production of "Miss Saigon," will be joined by four other Asian singers on the main stage but the spotlight would be mainly on her, said Atkins.

Tickets to the magnificent Khalifa Stadium, where the closing ceremonies will be held, have been selling briskly here.

Lolit Yu Ordoveza of Amphibian Park, Taytayan, Batangas, and Cristy Ledesma Nicolas—winner of OFWs here and part of the 1,000-strong army of Asiad volunteers—could marry Filipinos will not pass up the chance to see one of their own perform in Qatar's biggest entertainment event to date.

They said they also wanted to bid the 91-game athletes goodbye.

Thailand raps boxing officials

DOHA—THAILAND'S BOXING OFFICIALS stormed Thailand and point judging for his bout's, Rey Saludar in the last fourteen rounds, Saludar's fight, Thawatchai Suriyachan, Rey Saludar of Thailand's Amateur Boxing Association, said a combination of incompetent and biased judging had cost several of its fight, outrightfighters, and eventually, the former world and Olympic champion, in the ropes. The delegation had been expecting to pick up four golds in Doha, but looked ended up with only the medals table with only one silver.

(Reuters)

RP Doha Asian Games medalists

Gold—Arleen Salina, marathon; men's 4-halfpound weight, Violito Payla; boxing, flyweight (8 kg); Jean Flores, boxing, bantamweight (54 kg).

Silver—Mary Antonette Rivera, taekwondo, women's 67 kg; Veronica Takimoto, marathon; men's 62 kg, taekwondo, men's 74-kilogram singles; jeffrey de jesus, men's 4-halfpound singles; Mark Anthony Fameronag, karate, women's 68-kg.

Bronze—Edward Buenaventura, taekwondo, women's 67 kg; Genesis Jennings Sabuquete, women's 63 kg; Daniel Reiter Z. Salvamante, men's 67 kg; Bobby Jacobs, boxing, light-flyweight (48 kg); Samuel Rosales, boxing, lightweight (62 kg); Michael Eli Abiel, golf, men's singles; Abel Abiel, tennis, men's singles; Cecil Mamiit/Jeoffrey Tamayo, men's doubles; Mae Espinosa, karate, women's 60-kg.

Chessers rise to 9th place

THE PHILIPPINES RANKED PALESTINE, 9-1, to finish in solo ninth spot with nine round left in the Chessmen/Samahan Team competition of the 15th Asian Games at the Al-Ossra Club, Doha, Qatar, last Wednesday.

International Master Rogen Lydia and Ronald Dableo and 14-year-old Joben Lorenzo trounced Mr. Yamin, Taki Shoukara and Bader Awabe, respectively, to clinch the win.

Uzbekistan drew with Iran (3.5-3.5); Bangladesh also blasted Syria (3.5); while Indonesia yielded to top seed and sure gold medal winner India (3.5-2.5).

The only thing that prevented an Indian shutout of the locker was Grandmaster Parimarjan Negi's draw with Indian GM Pentala Harikrishna in their bout; 2 encounter Indian GM Krishnan Sasikiran and Humpy Koneru upped Dna Akhatov and FIDE Inter Shaheen Mahender reversed 1 and 3, respectively.

India, with one round to go, is assured of the gold medal within 21 game total.

Second-ranked China, with the draw with Kazakhstan, vaulted into second with 15.5 points while Iran country Qatar beat Turkmenistan (3-0) for third with 15.5 points.

The Philippines is set to face Turkmenistan in its final round. —Ed Marlon Bernardino

Champs arriving together

ALL THREE ASIAN GAMES GOLD medalists will be arriving home in one flight tentatively this Sunday with President Macapagal-Arroyo personally congratulating them to Malacañang on Dec. 21.

This was announced by the Manila-based Asiad secretariat yesterday as they made arrangement with airlines to get triumphant one-time Antonio Colinco and boxers Violito Payla and Jean Tipon to just one flight along with other medal winners.

Philippine Sports Commission official Joseph Ejercito added that the homecomer stay for Dec. 22 from Dec. 19.

The taekwondo team, which contributed to the RP cause with two silvers and three bronzes, arrived early this week even before the Philippines could win its first gold in the Qatar Games.

The country has already duplicated its three-gold haul four years ago in Busan, Korea, and is hoping for more golds in results going into the last day of competition.

Aside from the three golds, the 80-gram haul five silver and nine bronze medals and are ranked 17th overall in the 40-nation field.

Ejercito could not say whether there would be a ticker tape parade for the newest sporting heroes just like the one accorded boxing legend Manny Pacquiao when he came home after winning his grand finale against Mexican Erik Morales last month.

In 1994, the Philippines fared well with a ticker tape parade around the metropolis for three Asian Games boxing heroes: Elias Ammo, Gerardo Gallo, Gerardo Gallo.

Atkins went on to win a silver medal, which was the country's second, in the 1998 at Inchon Olympics.

Colinco, who was the 9-Gold singles after sending for the silver medal in the men's 60 kg class, is in line for a P1.5 million bonus under the sports incentive scheme. Payla and Tipon will each receive P1.5 million. Mary Antonette Rivera

RP pugs outshine Thais this time

By Ted S. Melendres

THE PHILIPPINES BEAT HEAVY favorite and Southeast Asian Games record Thailand to clinch place over the semis standings at the close of the boxing competitions at the 15th Asian Games.

The victories of flyweight Violito Payla and bantamweight Jean Tipon and the bronze won by featherweight Gresbert Rosales and Godfrey Castro pushed the Filipinos to No. 10 in the medal table with a 2-0-2 (gold-silver-bronze) harvest.

Uzbekistan, ranking in the heavyweight classes, topped the competition with three gold, one silver and 2 bronze medals.

Assuming Orlan pound two impressive victories—through light flyweight Jon Blessing and lightweight Hu Qing—and pipped the seven-man RP squad to second place by just a bronze.

Two automatic punching, quick-punching Cox initially surprised Thai favorite Julian Pumon as he took the gold on ISSC-6A conference atop combat-experienced one minute and 36 seconds into the second round fighting had ended only once when the fight was stopped...11-1.

The Thais settled for fourth place with 1-3-1, their only gold seen by Khem Obando lightweight champion Bunsri Jamrung.

The Filipinos held the Thais to a 2-2 standoff in their bout to head third.

"Malaking bagay ang tinalo natin si number one ang Thai at big deal iyan, medal-wise, sa host Thailand," chemical national coaches Ricardo Jimpo, Melito Briones and Ronald Chavez.

THE Philippine boxing team led by gold medalists Violito Payla and Jean Tipon after their triumphant Doha Asian Games campaign. The boxers grabbed two golds and two bronzes. (Standing from left) bronze medalist Gresbert Rosales (lightweight), Payla (flyweight), Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny V. Lopez, Tipon (bantamweight) and bronze medalist Godfrey Castro (light-flyweight). (Kneeling from left) welterweight Frances Jerma, featherweight Anthony Pascual and Cecilito Bolotaolo.

Tipon unable to recognize . . .

Viewpage A11

President Macapagal-Arroyo last.

Just as Tipon was being led away from the ring, Philippine ambassador Irene Bequeda managed to hand the phone over to the boxer. It was the President at the other end of the line.

"Sir, what did she tell you?" a confused Lopez asked Tipon, who suddenly seemed pale.

"Si Presidente (The President)?" he said. "Sir, hindi ko na ma-ring, malapat kay. Sir, I couldn't hear anything because of the noise."

"Si Presidente kasi at ka, si 'yong mga sikat ng telepono at a ambassador (It was the President, all right, and the man who handed you the phone was the ambassador)!" Lopez hurried.

"Nasorpresa na ako ang akala ko napatay ng GMA 7 ang pinatay kumbaga sa akin (I was very positive, sir, I thought a representative/GMA 7 member-talk name."

Before the group broke up for the night, Tipon sheepishly approached sports writers and said he wanted to thank his lawyer for his support.

"Nagpasalamat ako at Pangulo dahil tinitiwa niya sa pamamahay. I thank the President for being one with me in victory," he said. Nakakatuwa at hindi ko siya nakausap. It's a shame that I did not recognize her voice.

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Reliever powers Comets past Moneymen in 2 OTs

By Jasmine W. Paya

A LATE OFFENSIVE BOOST FROM THIRD-STRING GUARD ROMAN BLOsade yesterday lifted Mail and More to a 93-90 double overtime victory over Cebuana Lhuillier Pera Padala for a share of the lead in the PBL tilt-to-Cup at the UST Gym.

Buzzsaw came off the bench in the second extension and drilled in five straight points which proved key to the Comets' fifth win in seven games, one half for a four-game winning streak which would definitely save him more time in future games.

"I wasn't taking him because he was playing behind Lowell Calderon and [Mike] Hayes, who were both playing well," said coach Lawrence Chongson of Buzzsaw.

It was Mail and More's fourth straight win as it joined Hotshot Stars and Dagupan PCU on top.

In the second game, the Jolo'Rich Titans neared the Kettle Kuts.1337 Tigers, 74-52, to move up to fourth place with a 4-2 card.

The Titans broke away in the second half with Kito Vidanueva drilling in 13 of his 16 points in the third period, keeping the Tigers, the reigning UAAP champions, winless in seven games.

Elmer Espiritu was also a force, leaving the first overtime after blocking a Mindy Escalona shot in the dying seconds to preserve a 73-all tie. He later scored on a follow-up in the last two to forge the second extra period at 82.

JR Quinahan posted his second straight double-double with a game-high 21 points, 14 rebounds, and his slam-dunk-and-one also gave Jolo'Rich Mail and More.

Reyes chipped in 15 markers, including two free throws in the last 30.8 seconds of regulation that knotted the contest at 73.

Hayes scored on a layup and then a triple to seize the Comets to an 89-83 lead which proved safe with only 2:43 left.

Before Espiritu responded with four buzzer-beating baskets, Escalona's split from the free throw line had given the Moneymen an 82-80 lead heading into the final 10.7 seconds of the first extension.

The Comets seemed headed for a blowout win after leading by as many as 22 points, 55-33, midway in the third quarter.

Mark Mendiz, who shot a team-high 19 points, spearheaded the Moneymen's comeback to tie the game at 67-67, with two minutes left in regulation.

The Moneymen dribbled to their third straight loss to join the Magnolia Spinners at seventh place with 2-4 cards, while the Tigers remained winless in seven games.

The scores:

first game:

MAIL AND MORE 93—Sugbu 31, Reyes 15, Calleiana 11, Espiritu 10, Del Rosario 6, Virtucio 4, Quinahan 2, Tolentino 2, Buensalido 1, Daniel 2, Ramirez 2, Pinkihanel 2, Sabanosa 1

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 90—Mendiz 19, Bono 16, Jose Javier 15, Kramer 15, Escalona 8, Ho 7, Baby 5, Bagaoisan 4, Dela Cruz 1, Mendoza 0, Cruz 0, Tejada 0.

Quarters: 16-15, 41-31, 58-48, 73-73, reg.; 89-83 (OT), 93-90 (OT)

Second Game:

TITANS 74—Vidanueva 16, Ogina 12, Magayon 10, Bernardo 8, Labrador 7, Delgado 6, Villanueva 4, Dacanay 2, Ramirez 2, Magdadaro 1, Guerrero 0, Lawrence 0, Estrella 0

KETTLE KUTS.1337 52—Chavez 16, Daniel 10, Evangelista 10, Rivera 6, Dalisbisan 5, Dena 5, Zaldua 2, Gaddi 2, Dizon 2, Santos 2, Ayala 1, Dela Cruz 0, Mabanglo 0, De Guzman 0

Quarters: 12-14, 28-28, 53-38, 74-52

MAIL and More's JR Quinahan shoots over rival Kuts Bonsol Calleiana (JayBee Ybañez) yesterday

Pagadian ousts Tribu Sugbu, forges semis duel vs Ozamiz

ASIATONO

EJIJAN CITY—ASIATON Sammy Go's Dagudian Eagles ousted Arthur Sigo-hosted Tribu Sugbu, 85-76, Wednesday in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-MSC National Cup basketball tournament at the St. Michael's gym here.

Former PBA MVP Nelson Asaytono fired a game-high 30 points to propel the Eagles to a semifinal date with back-to-back champion Tanduay Cebu.

Asaytono drew 50 percent from the field and converted all his eight charities to spoil the Tribesmen's bid to extend the series after losing 92-103 in the first game.

PBA-bet guard Bob Johnson supported Asaytono with 22 points, 12 assists, seven rebounds and five steals.

The Tribesmen of head coaches Arnulfo and Leo Gillamac Sr. filled the classification at 6-3, the same card posted by the other semifinalist —Sydney Tejaytay.

The semifinal series kicks off today at the Lapu Cor-Jet College gym in Cagayan de Oro City with the Cooking Oil Maestro of NCR, president Ronnie Tan-Shellfix and league MVP Mayor Bambol Tolentino facing Gov. Manny Pilad's North Cotabato Brawns in the opener. Last year's finalists—Pagadian and Ozamiz—square off in the featured match.

The Explorers controlled the game from the start although only seven of them scored.

PBA Asaytono, Johnson and Pete Isaroa sunding box, the Explorers assumed their 25-22 first-quarter edge to 48-40 at the half and never looked back.

Tenorio's offensive tried to rally his team in no avail. Almazan finished with a league-career-high 27 points.

The scores:

DAGUDIAN 85—Asaytono 30, Johnson 22, Isaroa 17, Bonsubre 13, Dumlao 3, Mirasol 0, Dumahan 0, Arcega 0, Sioco 0, Andres 0, Mercantonio 0, Pamaran 0

TRIBU SU.—Arnaiz 25, Ajuden 9, Jocson 8, Mercado 8, Cos 5, Arnaiz 5, Bustio 4, Jocson 4, Cole 48, Antitog 3, Santos 2, Jose 0.

Quarters: 25-22, 49-40, 68-64, 85-76.

2nd Pichay Cup dangles Asian Zonals slots, cash

SLOTS FOR THE ASIAN ZONALS AND P450,000 will be up for grabs in the 22nd Cong. Peregrino A. Pichay Cup National Open Chess Championships and Chess Challenges slated Dec. 18-23 at the 5th Floor of SM Manila.

Aside from juicy cash prizes, the top five male and top three female players will get a chance to represent the Philippines in the Asian Zonals to be held in Vietnam in January 2007.

For the Cong. Peregrino Pichay Cup National Open, the champion takes the Cong. Peregrino A. Pichay Cup and P100,000. The top 15 players receive cash prizes. The top eight women will also receive prizes with the best player receiving P20,000.

National Chess Federation of the Philippines president and Batjan did her Inspirational on Pichay said the tournament will give local woodpushers the chance to acquire fide rewards since the National Open is a Fide Organized Chess Federation-rated event.

The 2nd Cong. Peregrino A. Pichay Cup Chess Challenge is open to invited players and offers a total cash prize of P150,000. Deadline for registration is Dec. 17.

For info, contact Ilano Ilano (0921-2139693), Gene Canada (0905-7525197), Patrick Lee (0917-7289200), Jared at 912-2968, Bep. Pichay's office at 951-0948 or E-mail NCFPcenter@yahoo.com, Inquiries or log on to NCFPhilippines.org.

India aims to close in on China

ELJOH CHAMP: Douglas Hasingking of Explorer Motorsports leaped four titles and the overall Points last time recently in the 12th and final leg of Race Motorsports Club National Rallcross Grand Prix 2006 at Robinson's Fairview, Novaliches, a 13-year-old student of La Salle-Greenhills, rated the Open B class, the Mexico Modified B, Mexico Modified C and Honda Prosaque. His brother Lily clinched the overall and production series best times at the Pit-A zone.

DOHA, QATAR—UNCLE ADARI JOSEPH MICHAEL take at the Asian Games has been dwarfed by China. Suresh Kalmadi's job is to ensure that situation changes.

As president of the Indian Olympic Association, Kalmadi helps supervise a multibillion-dollar country program aimed at overhauling India's sports development and giving China, one of the world's leading sporting nations and the only one with a bigger populist, a run for its money.

"We must beat almost every continental overseas," Kalmadi said in Doha, Qatar, on the fringes of the Asian Games, the continent's premier sporting event. "It's almost enervating for medals."

Kalmadi has his work cut out for him. While officials mentioned alongside China are a rising nation giant, India is nowhere close to upending it.

By Thursday, the second to last day of competition, China had 147 Asian Games golds to just nine for India. More telling, Indian athletes competed in only about half of the 39 events in India, compared with 37 for China.

In a particularly bitter defeat, eight-time Olympic champions India failed to win a medal in Asian Games men's hockey—since its first ever loss to China. AP

Runs ... (GMFB)—Cruz (Abad 4-0) (S), Lim (Herrera) (S), Lim (Abad) (S), Salud (Dungo) (S).

BY TOP CHOICE

Runs ... (Dimaculangan)(3)—Ramos (Ong) 1(1), Reality Show (S), Gold And Diamond (S), Mr. Love (S), Mahalkita (S).

Runs 2 ... (GMFB)—Federer Makati (3), Penny Wise (2), Mystery (S), Prince Ace (S).

Runs ... (Mandaluyong)—Star Kid, Kennedy (S), Double Dream (S), Lucky Heaven (S), Rudolph (S), Mayor's Choice (S).

Runs 3 ... (GMFB)—Amazing Pl. Light (S), Mindanao Star (S), Sanggre Girls Star (S), Land Of Oz (S).

Runs ... (Mandaluyong)—Golden Dream 2 (), Baby Pagcor Ko (2), Blind Swinger (S), Lucinda's Angel (S), Power Cut (S).

Runs ... (GMFB)—Lion Gate (3), Lucky Cat (2), Dear Your Gold (S), Winner D'Goddess (S).

Runs 4 ... (Mandaluyong)—Lucky Cat (2), Dad Not Blame (S), Mayor's Choice (S), Dear Ashley (S).

Runs 5 ... (Manila)—Mahalkita (S), Playing Card (S), Hanuman (S), Golden Dragon (S), Golden Eye Gold (S), Awesome Power (S).

Policarpio bags TRS Ford Focus Cup title

JOHNARIE POLICARPIO BLAZED two of the last four races to emerge overall champion in the 2006 TRS Ford Focus Cup recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The youngest in the field at 17, Policarpio displayed intensity and determination in earning both older and more experienced rivals Ricardo Rosa and Jeff Ang.

That was enough to secure the title as he wrapped up the two-day affair with a total of 134 points. Yoti Tandiar ended overall runner-up with 78 points while former karting champ Matthew Ho rounds took third place with 58.

"This is a dream come true," said Jomari. "I always wanted to be a race driver and I thank Dad (Jhopet) who has always been so supportive. And the way I handled we had flown and the Toyota Racing School for giving me this opportunity to shine."

"Tomorrow I foresee it because he really gave his best. And we're proud to say that with his title-clinching feat, Jomari now is the challenge to earn the tag as the next important star in Philippine motorsports," said JP Yuseco, a former karting champ and president of the organizing Passon Racing School.

SPORTSWATCH

Rotary, Guangko 3rd in JMII

FILIPINOS WALTER BERNARD MAPUS Guangko notched their place in the inaugural Asia Pacific International Invitational (JMII) golf tournament recently at The Boar's Course, Jupiter, Florida, USA. Dubbed the Tournament of Champions, the event was the culmination of a series of amateur golf championships held in various countries earlier this year. The finals, which is a game-by-tournament competition, saw the participating teams with two-man golfers, Hatsuo and Guangko, who were selected after completing at the qualifying tournament held in the Hino Golf Club in Gardening, Laguna. In July, competition with other amateur teams from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan, Korea, China and Indonesia. Hino and JMII Foundation Engaged awarded and first prizes respectively.

Runners Executive Classic

THE RUNNER'S MECHANICS EXECUTIVE CLASSIC, ORGanized called Dec. 3, will push through Dec. 31 marking the 10th anniversary of the Runner's Mechanics Executive Classic. "We've been in the business and we've seen that the Runners Confederation of the Philippines has assumed an of its support," said Runner president Dr. Alberto Veloso. Entry forms are available at the Runners Mechanics, 1280 Pinger Engineering, 106 Pelikano Street Dr., Caloocan City. Registration fee is P500. For information, call Mary Anne in Area at 366-8067, 364-6107, Abacus Area or Systems, 198 Abad Ave., QC, 929-3961, 800-3042, or look for Marvin Mary at Runner Diaz at the Quezon Memorial Circle from 7-9 a.m.

Delads defends title tonight

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—RANDY PHILIPPINE lightweight king Dexter "Dinamita" Delads will defend his title against Arnel Porras tonight in a 10-round clash at the Gusa Sports Complex here. This will be Delads's first defense of the title he won by stopping Christopher Saludo on July 13 in Bacolod City. Delads, 30-4 with 11 KOs, is slightly favored over the 30-year-old Porras, who is coming off a win over Alexander Arcilla in Australia. "This is an important fight for him. A win will be a big boost," said fight promoter and Delads's manager Rey "Manny" Saludo, who will witness the fight before returning to General Santos City to grace Manny Pacquiao's birthday celebration. On the undercard, Jhoje Oriada trades mitts with Bohol representative Isidro Rabaliat Jr. in 10-round encounter, while local boy Jomel Sioco of Cotabato City squares off Sonny Sabio of Mandaluyong City in Cebu City.

Zaher Lagrimas contributor

100 fights at Pasay Cockpit

THE ANNUAL PROMOTIONAL FIGHT OF THE BARRIO starts at 3 p.m. today at Pasay City Cockpit with more than 100 fights scheduled. Five-rooster Battle Royale Opens, only with one left in the round, cash total guaranteed prize is P100,000. Each participant gets a P1K packet. Participants include Wilfredo Da Lito Cabais, Boy Corpuz, Roger Dagumboran, 2006 Champion Ramon Gonzaga, Dominic Ochoa and Jaime Amparo. Cocks include Grand Champion Rooster Vicente, William Co, Nasty Naked, Nasty Lapis, Nay Mariano, Sam Obedencio, Rudolf Pua, Ramil Ruben Lim, Pangasinan and Cebu Matadors. For info: 0921-5931/0917-1190 and 896-3930.

Marcelo dons RP colors in Asian Karting finals

MUNG FLEVINO STAR JEAN STEFANO Marcelo goes up against world caliber karters in the finals of the Asian karting Championship this weekend at the Macao track.

The 14-year-old Filipino, who wound up fourth overall in the 2006 Shell Superkarting Series, is the third generation of the Marcelo Karting family. He's the grandson of racing legend Eddie Marcelo and is one of fourteen Pan Asi champ and Nomada Dhwo drivers John Marcelo.

Stefano, who competed in the Italian Open Masters Championship, will be donning the RP colors in the Rotax Max Senior+ division. He's hoping to use the event as a springboard to the 2007 debut of his uncle Jerry Marcelo, the 1999 Toyota Atlantic champion who died in crash during practice in the 1999 season of the Indianapolis 500 auto race on July 8th.

"That will be for the country's glory," said Stefano. "The experience at the Italian open Masters Karting championship will be a big help and having any mechanical problem, I promise to give it my best shot."

He'll be racing for the MMR Karting Team. "Bringing the world-class mechanic background of a former world karting champion Jerry Pulliam has.

"A big fear here could open up more doors to our goal of going international next year," said Stefano. "The hope is to show top world racing officials who will be watching in Macao that we Filipinos have the talent to become world-caliber karters."

JEAN STEFANO MARCELO

China inches closer to Busan gold haul

DOHA, QATAR—PEOPLE'S TIE ASIAN Games were winding down Wednesday, China seemed to be gaining back up.

With just one full day of competition left, the Chinese were 10 much gold medals Wednesday to secure just three away from the 356 they won in Busan, South Korea, in 2002.

More strikingly—at least to how the country has dominated the other 44 nations here—the 2006 Beijing Olympic hosts stretched 126 ahead of their nearest rivals. South Korea has 51 gold and Japan 49, those two countries left to battle it out for a distant second place.

With 41 more gold medals to be decided Thursday there's a good chance China could widen the gap even more. Only two golds will be awarded Friday, when China's basketball team faces Mark prospect Yi Jianlian plays Qatar in the final.

China beat Jordan, 86-58, and Qatar edged Iran, 67-64, in basketball semifinals Wednesday. That gave the home country one big chance for gold on the final day—Qatar plays Iraq in the men's soccer gold medal match just a few hours before the closing ceremonies.

Earlier, tennis player Zheng Jie added to China's burgeoning total in the women's final, Zheng beat fourth-seeded Anna Mikin of India, 6-4, 1-6, 6-1.

In the deciding set, Zheng went up two service breaks to lead 5-1. Then were her next service game to love.

In the final game, Mina double-faulted twice—on the last two points of the match.

"I served quite well in the beginning, but then began making silly mistakes," said Mina. "Zheng capitalized on my chances and I did not." AP

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Qataris face Chinese for cage crown

DOHA, QATAR—FORMER BALIAN WARRIOR Wang Zhizhi scored 20 points as China advanced to the Asian Games basketball final with a 86-58 win over Jordan Wednesday night.

China will now face host Qatar, which held off Iran, 67-64, in Tuesday's gold medal match.

Urged on by a raucous shooting section, Abdulla Ibn is a 24-21 lead in the first quarter. China match Jonas Kaukenas switched from the team to score defensive and China began to tighten up, taking a 41-32 lead at the half.

With 3 minutes, 46 seconds left in the third quarter, China's lead had expanded to 13 points with the game seemed secure. Jordan struggled to the China added another 20 before the final buzzer for the 28-point win.

With China's Reserve Bedsit star Yao Ming remaining in the US, Wang has been shouldering more duties and he unmarked Jordan inside the paint all night, ending night for 16 in shooting with three rebounds for him.

Yi Jianlian, a 19-year old NBA prospect, added 17 points, while Du Feng to scored 12. Jordanian captain Zaid Al Khas scored 27 points while seeking to hold together his increasingly frustrated and ragged looking teammates.

Mo Ki was Bashas from field goal range, shooting five for five, including three three-pointers, to rack up 13 points. AP

Suns hotter than Heat

MIAMI—TIM PARKER JOHN WON their 12th straight game—their longest winning streak in 14 years—by shooting the Miami Heat, 99-89, in the NBA on Wednesday.

It is the first time they have won 12 straight games since their 14-match winning streak in 1992, as they improved to 15-6 while handing Miami its third loss in its past five games.

Forward Wade joined Shaquille O'Neal on the sidelines for the final after having two stitches sewn by renowned on Tuesday. He status is day to day.

Phoenix shot 48 percent from the field while the Heat managed to shoot just 40 percent, with Miami hitting just four of its 19 shots from three-point range.

Taking advantage of Wade's absence, the Suns raced to a 56-40 half-time lead before extending it to 21 points after three quarters.

The Heat staged a furious fourth quarter rally arranges after the lead grew to 25 points in one point, but the Suns hung on to complete a perfect 5-0 road trip and give them their second longest winning streak in franchise history.

Shawn Marion paced the Suns with 25 points and 12 rebounds, while Steve Nash had 18 points and 11 assists. Boris Diaw chipped in with 15 points and 11 rebounds for the winners.

Shawn Marioning led the downtrodden Heat with 19 points, while Udonis Haslem added 14 points and seven rebounds.

Gilbert Arenas had 29 points to lift the Washington Wizards to their fourth win in five games, a 100-91 over of the Denver Nuggets. Carmelo Anthony led Denver with 27 points.

COMPLETE RESULTS: Detroit 108, Atlanta 85; Milwaukee 98, Seattle 93; LA Lakers 102, Memphis 94; Golden State 108, Sacramento 91; [illegible]

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Realtors eye revenge vs Kings

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TOMS	11	4
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Purefoods	10	6
Talk N Text	9	7
Air21	7	9
Alaska	5	12
Coca-Cola	4	13
National	3	14

STA. LUCIA REALTY DOESN'T WANT TO BE IN A POSITION where the chances of snaring an outright semifinal seat are bleak.

The Realtors aim to topple powerhouse Barangay Ginebra Kings tonight in the Talk 'N Text PBL Philippine Cup at the Ynares Center to remain in contention for the top two spots by the end of the classification round.

"We need this win badly," said Sta. Lucia Realty coach Alfonsito Chua of the 7:25 p.m. contest with the Kings, lamenting that a defeat could put the fate of the Realtors to the next round beyond their control.

"There's still a possibility to advance outright (into the semis). If we could win our last two games, I think we might have a chance," he added.

After stopping a three-game skid at the expense of the Welcoat Dragons, the Realtors are looking to get back at the Kings and end their elimination campaign with finish over the Coca-Cola Tigers.

But Chua knows it wouldn't be easy. On a five-game winning run, the Kings are gunning for a win and an outright berth in the best-of-seven semifinals.

The Kings, who have three games left in the preliminaries, lead the race with an 11-4 record while the Jose Miguel Boysters are close behind after nailing their 11th win in 15 games the other night.

The Realtors are tied with Red Bull and Purefoods for third with 10 victories and six losses.

"Every game is important as it's going to be tough," said Ginebra coach Jong Uichico after downing Coca-Cola Giant Gerald Fabie and the Asiri in Cocoma City almost a week ago.

"Even though we're coming off a six-day layoff, I know my team is still hungry for a win," he added. "I expect the same level of intensity when we played Alaska."

The loss rake on the 6021 Express in the outside since working to at least improve their seeding in the wildcard phase.

At 5-10, the Aces are out of the running for an automatic quarterfinal seat along with the Express (7-9).

The top two teams in the classification round go straight to the semifinals while the ones which wound up third to fifth will earn automatic quarterfinal tickets.

Teams ranked sixth to ninth will play in the single-round wildcard phase where the top seed secures the last quarterfinal slot. —Jane Hurtarte

Pagunsan, Que 5 shots off pace

By Musong R. Castillo

PAGUNSAN

VETERAN PRAPAS Mahinnong led the crown of Thailand's pre-golf loop in taking control of the Subra Asian Masters, shooting a five-under-par 67 for a one-stroke lead over two countrymen and two others yesterday.

Thongchai Jaidee and Prom Meesawan scored 68s and were joined by Aussie Terry Pilkadaris and Taiwanese Lin Keng-chi in second even as Filipinos Angelo Que and Juvic Pagunsan opened up with level 72s at the Thai Country Club in Bangkok, Thailand.

Mahinnong, who failed to regain his US PGA Tour card in qualifying earlier this month, was on target the whole day the only bogeyed in his 15-32 card coming in the par-5 No. 6, which he bogeyed.

Thais Chapchai Nirat and Chawalit Plaphol were a further stroke back while Filipinos Jeff Lee Suing, who was born deaf, Clarence Taipet's Lu Hsi-chih and Wang Tze-chung, Malaysia's Iskandar Azman Gerson and Singaporean Chris Rodgers also matched for joint ninth.

The 28-year-old Pagunsan, playing his first tournament since posting a lock on the Asian Tour's Rookie of the Year award, opened up with two birdies before finishing with a bogey but finished with a 3-iron stay in the fight.

Juvic, runner-up to Jose Manuel Lara of Spain in the Hong Kong Open two weeks ago, had five birdies and the same number of bogeys.

Que, winner of the inaugural Clubbing Masters Vietnam in 2004, was at 3-under after 15 holes before sputtering on the way home to share 29th position along with Pagunsan and eight others.

The $650,000 (around P35.5 million) event is the final leg of the 2004 Asian Tour, which is reserved for the top 60 money earners.

Frankie Minoza opened up with a bogey-5 on the par-4 first hole before scrambling with duo birdies on Nos. 4 and 15 for a 70. And left Ore Jong-chan KP saw a no for 50th place.

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Aboitiz wins bidding for Magat plant

$530-M offer bested bid of FirstGen unit

By Abigail L. Ho

SN ABOITIZ POWER INC. YESTERDAY WON THE bidding for the 360-megawatt (MW) Magat hydropower plant in Isabela with an offer of $530 million.

The giant Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) to biggest asset sale to date.

The company, a joint venture between Aboitiz Equity Ventures and SK Power Holding Singapore, bested First Generation Northern Energy Corp., the only other bidder, which offered $520.9 million for the asset.

SK Power Holding is a unit of Hanwha's (SN Power forest AG.

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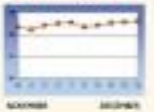

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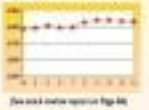

Shares close flat

BSP sees 2007 exports rising by 14% to $52.2B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES HAS UPGRADED ITS EXport growth target for 2007 to 14 percent from an earlier projection of 10.5 percent, despite a likely slowdown in the US economy, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The local government forecast, which was based on the export earnings definition of the National Statistics Office, will result in total receipts of $52.21 billion for next year.

"This is based on expectation that there will be continued growth in Europe and an improvement in the economic activity in Japan which will partly offset the impact of a slowdown in the US," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press briefing.

He said increased trading with China and other Southeast Asian neighbors would likewise fuel growth in export revenues.

The BSP also expects the country's import bill to grow by 14 percent to $61.95 billion.

Based on the BSP's outlook on balance of payments, however, export earnings were assumed to grow by 12 percent to $48.39 billion while the import bill was projected to expand by the same rate to be $53.6 billion.

Inflows from exports, along with strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers and foreign portfolio and direct investments, are expected to allow the BSP to put more international reserves to the $29 billion next year.

The increase in import spending already assumes higher oil prices as well as purchases of capital goods and raw materials to support exports and the recovery of manufacturing

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USDA allows RP mango shipments to US territories

Dole expands operations in N. Luzon

TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS in Northern Luzon, Dole Philippines Inc. has signed a contract growing and marketing agreement with the provincial government of La Trinidad, Benguet.

According to Gregory C. Bisquera, Dole Philippines director for Northern Luzon, the memorandum of agreement he signed with La Trinidad Mayor Nestor Fongwan and agriculture secretary Arthur C. Yap would leverage the operations of the agribusiness company on the island.

Presumably, Dole hoosted its operations and resources in the Mountain and Ilocandian regions.

Bisquera said that the MOA would expand Dole Philippines' line of FreshFy packaged fruit and vegetable products.

Under the agreement with the provincial government of La Trinidad, the company would lease an entirely idle by the municipal cut-up-mediated methods based on the code Good Agricultural Practice (GAP).

"It has been agreed upon that farmers participating in the contract growing program will work to ensure that the agricultural products are produced organically or with minimal inorganic inputs, (to) comply with the maximum residue limits (MRLs) as set forth by the export markets," Bisquera said.

According to the MOA, the provincial government of La Trinidad will establish a PA and line facility where the fruits and vegetables would be washed, cleaned and packed.

The Department of Agriculture, on the other hand, would take charge of the technical and training of farmers required by the GAP.

Yap said that the establishment of modern post-harvest facilities would improve agricultural production in the province.

La Trinidad has over 30,000 hectares of vegetable and fruit farms tilled by over 200,000 farmers. Christina A. Cayhon

Americans turn to other mango sources in Luzon

By Christina A. Cayhon

PHILIPPINE MANGO EXPORTERS must mount a better chance of securing the $200-million fresh mango market of the United States as federal authorities have begun to allow shipments to South and Hawaii.

Mangoes from all over the country, except Palawan, will be allowed entry in US territories, as well as Hawaii, said Jeanice Robles, US Department of Agriculture director.

Robles described this development as "an advancement for Philippine exports."

Before, only mangoes grown on Guimaras island were allowed into US territories.

"So far no acceptance in the US mainland, experimental shipments will commence, starting with Luzon mangoes," Robles added.

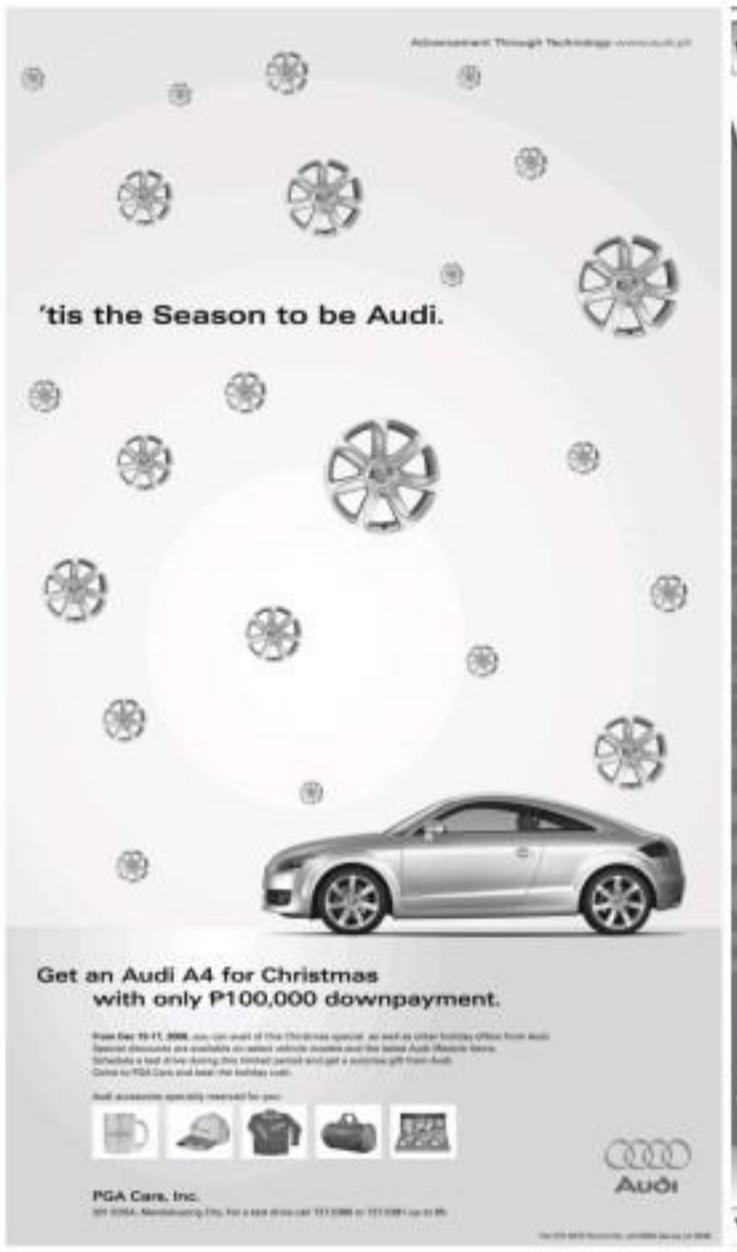
He also said that the USDA would grant $1 million for the experimental shipment. The Food and Authorities would also undertake a pest risk analysis (PRA) of Philippine mangoes grown elsewhere, to determine if they could safely turn to import sources other than Guimaras island in Western Visayas.

"The results of the pest risk analysis will be the basis for which US quarantine authorities will approve or deny the Philippines' request to also allow mango production outside of Guimaras island to export the tropical fruit to the US," Yabut said.

Representatives of the USDA, the Bureau of Plant Industry, the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and the Food Development Center met recently to finalize details of the irradiation process on mangoes—a requirement of US quarantine authorities.

"Talpek na irradiation ... will be assessing the quality of mangoes irradiated at the standard minimum absorbed level," according to Agriculture Undersecretary Salvador Salcedo. "This will require a budget of at least P526,500."

Aside from the limited shipments to the United States, the Philippines has also been delivering fresh mangoes to Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Belgium.



Foreign chambers seek market reforms

By Bernardo M. Villegas

THE JOINT FOREIGN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE of the Philippines has asked Congress to pass two laws related to capital markets development reforms that will benefit workers employed in foreign firms.

In separate letters addressed to Senate President Manuel Villar and House Speaker Jose de Venecia, JFC asked both chambers to approve bills to establish a Personal Equity and Retirement Account (PERA) and a Tax Bond Code.

"Each bill is important to the hundreds of thousands of Filipinos employed by our members (as well as) millions of employees in the formal sector of the economy who are among the most heavily taxed groups in the economy," the group said.

JFC members include the American, Australia-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese and Korean chambers and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters.

"A large number of our employees have invested their modest savings in personal plans, especially for the future education of their children," the group explained.

"(But) some have been prevented by the inability of plan providers to meet contractual obligations to provide benefits when plans mature," it added.

JFC said the Tax Bond Code would seek to prevent such abuses through improved industry regulation and increased penalties for erring policy providers.

On the other hand, the Pera would allow individual taxpayers "who are already subject to the highest personal income tax rates in Asia to save small amounts tax-free."

JFC noted that the Philippines has a low savings rate, adding that a Pera law would encourage Filipinos to save up through arrangements like the United States' Individual Retirement Account.

25-40% of NCR employers deemed delinquent by SSS

Some not paying, others underdeclaring

By Dave C. Dumlao

ABOUT 25-40 PERCENT OF THE EMployers in the National Capital Region were found delinquent in paying their mandatory contributions to state-owned pension fund Social Security System.

SSS officials, however, said the current delinquency rate already showed a big improvement from more than 50 percent in 1991.

They attributed the improvement to the SSS' partnership with local government units and the holding of mass cash events to recruit officers to drag out employers.

Employers considered delinquent included not only those that were not remitting contributions but also those under-reporting the number of their employees.

SSS vice president for NCR group Soraya Ortega said many of the delinquent employers identified were those with 10 or less employees, including printing presses, beauty parlors and small restaurants. She said two newspapers were among those found delinquent. She, however, refused to name them.

Based on current rates and laws in the 1990s, Ortega said the SSS collects 4 percent of employers' contributions as the NCR—which accounts for 39 percent of the SSS' nationwide collections—was improving.

"Some employers don't pay because they think they won't be discovered. By fielding more account officers who are well trained, they can easily be identified," Ortega said.

Employers found delinquent have to pay penalties to the SSS and benefits to their employees, even if their companies have already shut down, she added.

The SSS has about 234,000 active-13 paying employers as the NCR has registered companies, number about 570,000, of which about 30-40 percent have likely ceased operations.

"We don't have enough people now to check those that ceased operations, but I believe over all of those that were not in the active payee list I skipped had closed down," Ortega said.

The SSS' partnership with LGUs, Ortega said, was also giving good results because an business establishments incorporate without registering with the SEC.

"The moment hands on employers. We give them alternatives, like access to pays (payment in kind) or payment on installment basis," Ortega said.

But should a delinquent company choose not pay in installment, the said it would be required to settle the pro-

(CLICK) B-1

MINING FIRM GETS PERMIT
Coloured Mining Corp. president Tyrone Ong and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes shake hands following the presentation of the mining firm's environmental compliance documents to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The 2,000-hectare ground Colcoal Mining is poised to produce 600,000 metric tons of coal in Mindoro's Lubon, Ting Minglong of PT Mineralindo Bintang (left) and Colcoal Mining COO Daniel Bauman (right) joined Ong in the presentation.

RP-Indonesia coal deal opposed

By Abigail L. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF Coal Miners (Philcoal) will oppose a bilateral agreement between the Philippines and Indonesian government for the supply of Indonesian coal to Philcoal Power Corp.

The agreement is expected to be signed on Monday.

According to Philcoal, while the long-term coal supply deal "the government will unduly interfere in a coal mining industry's business which should properly be left to the private sector."

Instead of striking such deals, the group said the government should just let market forces dictate the direction that the coal industry should take.

"The advocates behind such agreement or understanding is to secure stable supply and equally stable prices of coal. However, there is an abundant supply of coal in the world market and its price have been going down and expect to go down further in the foreseeable future due to increasingly "Philcoal said.

"But through government-to-government pact like coal-to-oil or other equivalent, as this will expose us unduly to unfair competition," the group added.

Philcoal urged the government to reconsider its decision to enter a bilateral agreement with Indonesia, considering the oversupply of coal in the world market.

In an earlier interview, Energy Undersecretary Guillermo Balce said the long-term coal supply agreement would be in line with a memorandum of understanding that the government signed with Indonesia in 2001.

If a government-to-government agreement could not be achieved, he said another option would be for the Department of Energy to order deals with Indonesian coal miners and company PT Tambang Batubara.

At present, however, PT Bukit Asam did not have excess supply that it could sell to the Philippines, he said.

What the government-owned coal firm could do, he said, was to source coal supply agreements with private coal companies in Indonesia.

BSP policy rates unchanged

THE MONETARY BOARD YESTERDAY DECIDED to keep the Bangko Sentral's key interest rates steady at 7.5 percent for the overnight borrowing and 9.75 percent for overnight lending.

In its meeting yesterday, the Monetary Board also unanimously the easing system on bank placements, central bank operations and a monetary easing cycle.

Timing of a system where the BSP pays a lower rate for short-term money placed by banks in excess of certain threshold levels, to encourage banks to lend out instead of parking all their funds with the monetary authority.

Under the system, only the first P5 billion of short-term money placed with the BSP will be paid the overnight borrowing rate (currently at 7.5 percent). The next P5 billion will yield 100 basis points less than the published rate (6.5 percent) and subsequent increments of P5 billion will yield 400 basis points less (3.5 percent).

"The latest inflation readings remain in line with the low-cost path, given existing oil prices and exchange rates. Equally important, inflation expectations also remain well-anchored," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

"The Monetary Board also believes that the policy actions in November should be given time to work its way through the various channels of monetary policy including the credit channel," he said.

Dave C. Dumlao

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Bond Fund - Peso	1.08020	1.08000
Managed Fund - Peso	1.66096	1.59708
Growth Fund - Peso	1.56466	1.54709
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.4810	1.4810

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	Dec. 11, 2000	Dec. 4, 2000
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Balanced Fund	1.201387	1.297897
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Petron shuts down refinery unit for repair

By Abigail L. Ho

INDUSTRY GIANT PETRON CORP HAS IMported 100,000 barrels of gasoline to ensure adequate supply of fuel while its 14,000-barrel-a-day fcc (catalytic cracker) refinery unit (CCRU) is undergoing repairs.

In a statement to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, the oil firm said the nonferrous shutdown of the refinery unit is for it to undergo necessary repairs, and so that the shut down for the shutdown.

Until the CCRU goes back on stream on Dec. 29, Petron will be taking a power-borrower unit that has been an economic shutdown is perfect in some of the functions of the CCRU.

Although the CCRU would not be operating for almost two weeks, Petron said it had "ample product inventories" for the month, except for gasoline.

In December gasoline requirements would be addressed by the 100,000 barrels that is recently imported. The shipment arrived yesterday.

Apart from making the necessary repairs to its existing refinery facilities, Petron is also on track in diversifying into the petrochemicals business, with the ongoing establishment of its Petron Fluidized Catalytic Cracker (PetroFCC), which would enable it to produce more high-value white products and petrochemical-grade propylene.

As part of the company's $300-million refinery master plan, Petron will also put up a $75-unit that will produce aromatics such as benzene and toluene and expand its mixed xylene production capacity.

"Given the demand and supply imbalance for petrochemicals, we are very optimistic that these projects will maintain our growth momentum for years to come," Petron president Khalid Al-Fuddagh had earlier said.

Petron closed the first nine months with a net income of P4 billion, 14.4 percent lower than the P4.79 billion posted for the same period last year.

The oil refiner attributed its lower clean-up period profit to inventory losses due to an "unprecedented fall in International oil prices" that it had to reflect in pump prices despite having to use product inventory bought at higher rates.

After reaching a high of $78.64 a barrel in August, Petron said the regional benchmark Dubai crude fell to as low as $54.93 a barrel in September.

Import margins, particularly for industrial fuel oil, were likewise adversely affected by the sudden price drop. Sales of mixed xylene, however, remained robust.

Goings On

DPC's new system

DIGITAL PHOTO PHILIPPINES Corp. has announced the acknowledge management system of Hong Kong-based PCCW Directory as its integrate and provide new Yellow Pages publishing process print, electronic and mobile platforms.

[illegible] president Vivian D. Bautista and PCCW's chief executive officer Bernard Lee formalized the multimillion-peso agreement, covering license, training and implementation fees, in a simple ceremony in Hong Kong recently.

PCCW is credited developing the system for its own Yellow Pages business in 2001. Its functionalities—IVR, sales & customer management modules, production and billing management modules, product management modules, and peripheral support modules, covering customer activities management and billing integration—can be implemented independently in the next few years. PCCW/DPC added other enhancements that have made this system an intelligent and powerful Yellow Pages management suite.

PVB's monitoring system

PHILIPPINE VETERANS Bank (PVB) said Wednesday it has completed the implementation of its Anti-Money Laundering (AML) system.

PVB is the first in the country to comply with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Circular 495, despite the deadline being extended to October 2007.

This manifests PVB's strong support for the government's efforts to curb illegal financial operations in the country," said Veterans Bank president Joe Barbers.

The circular requires local banks to adopt an electronic money laundering transaction monitoring system.

PVB acquired the Anti Money Laundering Solution from SAS, a leading software provider of business intelligence solutions and applications.

CebuPac flies to Bangkok

CEBU PACIFIC (CEB), the country's low-fare leading domestic carrier, yesterday launched its maiden flight from Manila to Bangkok, Thailand.

CEB's Manila-Bangkok service is scheduled to operate every Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The flight departs from Manila at 10:45 p.m. and arrives in Bangkok at 12:30 a.m. the following day. The flight from Bangkok departs at 1:30 a.m. to arrive back in Manila at 5:30 a.m.

CEB will be operating from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila and the Don Mueang International Airport in Bangkok.

Sun subscribers seen to hit 2.2M

Digitel set to offer 3G services

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

DIGITEL MOBILE PHILIPPINES Inc. (Digitel Mobile), or more popularly Sun Cellular mobile phone service brand, expects to build up its mobile phone subscriber base to 2.2 million this year, a company official yesterday said at the inclusion of the Digitel listing anniversary at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) in Pasig City.

Digitel Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (Digitel) senior vice president Wilhelm Pantoja said that the mobile phone arm of the Gokongwei group has expanded its line capacity to accommodate up to 6 million subscribers from two million last 2006.

The target of 2.2 million this year will represent a 29-percent growth from about 1.7 million subscribers last year, Pantoja said.

Also, Digitel vice chair James Go said that the firm is preparing to roll out its third generation cellular service over the next three months.

Go said Digitel would allot $200 million a year for the expansion of its mobile phone business, which will be funded through internally generated cash and borrowings from export credit agencies.

Today, Digitel has over 1,000 cell sites.

In terms of wireless broadband, the Digitel group is also lowering around $385 million in the roll-out of Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL), a technology for transmitting digital data in a high bandwidth on existing copper telephone lines to homes and businesses, officials said.

To pave the way for the launch of its Sun Cellular 3G cellular service next year, Digitel Mobile will invest more than P5.3 billion to roll out new telecom infrastructures nationwide.

Digitel Mobile's planned 3G services will include video calling, wireless broadband access and high-speed downlink packet access services which are already being offered by competitors Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc.

PSE chief predicts more, but smaller, IPOs in 2007

By Dandee L. Lucas

THE LOCAL STOCK MARKET may see more firms going public next year, but it is unlikely that any of them will be as big as the recent initial public offering (IPO) of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC).

According to Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) president Francis Lim, he has held several discussions with firms that are interested in raising money by selling their stocks on the exchange in 2007.

"It looks like there will be more of them, but not in the same magnitude as this one," he told reporters, referring to PNOC-EDC's P16.7-billion IPO, the shares of which debuted on the stock market last Wednesday.

Dearth

Lim declined to identify the firms that may go public next year, citing confidentiality agreements, but he said that he is trying to persuade locations-ing firm Orbit Network Inc. and oil refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. to proceed with their IPO plans.

On top of this, the PSE chief said he has received three times more inquiries from firms interested in listing their shares on the exchange over the last quarter compared to the number of discussions he'd had in the same quarter of last year.

The local stock market continues to experience a dearth of IPOs, despite its relatively strong performance in recent months.

Dampened

The less firms that have listed their shares this year include power firm First Gen Corp., which raised P8.3 billion; car leasing company online broker Citiseconline.com, which raised P349 million in July; mass rumor Alliance Tele Entertainment Inc., which raised P 860 million last month; and biodiesel firm Chemrez Technologies Inc., which raised P1.5 billion also last month.

According to the PSE, capital raised from IPOs of stock and additional share offers of listed companies rose to P27.4 billion as of October from P20.6 billion last year—excluding the money raised recently from the IPO of PNOC-EDC and other more recent issues.

Lim conceded, however, that the Philippine Stock Exchange Index' strong performance this year is dampened by the fact that trading volume in the local market remains thin relative to the bourses of neighboring countries.

"We are trying to address this issue by developing linkages with other stock exchanges around Asean," he said.

Despite Lim's optimistic assessment for next year, the IPO activity in the local exchange remains muted compared to the activity seen during the boom years of the 1990s.

Dwindling values

In 1994, for example, the stock market saw IPO activity peak when 21 companies listed on the stock exchange, including San Miguel Corp., Universal Robina Corp., Petron Corp., Manila Equity Ventures, Cemex Semilog Corp. and Cebu Holdings Inc. That year, stock offers raised a total of P37.43 billion.

Over the years, the value of stock offers dwindled, and reached a low of P346.14 million in 2000, when four companies braved the market.

In 2005, with the economy riding a positive wave, the market started to flourish again. That year, stock offers raised a total of P33.3 billion.

A TRADER walks inside the Philippine Stock Exchange at the Makati financial district. According to PSE's Francis Lim, more and more firms are now interested in raising money by selling their stocks on the exchange. BLOOMBERG

Trans-Asia to buy all issued shares of power company

PUBLICLY LISTED TRANS-ASIA OIL AND Energy Development Corp. has secured the nod of its board of directors to buy all the issued shares of EPH Power Corp. from Transasia Utilities Pte. Ltd. of Singapore.

Company officials yesterday could not be reached to provide more details on the deal.

In a separate disclosure, Trans-Asia Oil said EPH Power is a Philippine company engaged in power generation and distribution within the Cavendish Industrial Park II Special Economic Zone in Balamban City, Cebu province.

Asiawide Utilities Pte. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Asiawide Investment Pte. Ltd. of Singapore.

The company has suspended trading of the shares of Trans-Asia Oil pending disclosure of the terms and conditions of the deal.

In 2004, Trans-Asia entered into an electricity supply agreement with Guimaras Electric Cooperative Inc. (Guimelco), the lone electricity distributor on the island of Guimaras, and obtained an acquisition of a 3.6-megawatt (MW) bunker C-fired diesel generator power station on the island.

The construction of the Guimaras power plant was completed in February 2005. Commercial operations started on June 16, 2005.

Trans-Asia has been investing in various other operating companies, making cash placements.

Its largest investment is still Trans-Asia Power Generation Corp., of which it owns 50 percent. — Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Furniture makers get P80M worth of Japan orders

By Rosemar W. Domingo

TWO PHILIPPINE FURNITURE MAKERS would split between themselves some P80 million, or $1.76 million, worth of orders from Japanese buyers during a furniture expo held in Tokyo last November, according to the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions.

Trade Assistant Secretary Felicisimo Aguado Jr. has said Uratt Mill Inc. and Mass Home Interiors Co. were the only Filipino firms that took part in the International Furniture Fair Tokyo on Nov. 22-25.

Uratt Mill makes gift and storage boxes, photo frames and other home and office items, while Mass Manufacturing makes contemporary mahogany furniture and home accessories.

"We were able to exceed the target sales even with only two companies joining the IFFT," Bersa said. "The Philippine delegation hosted other Southeast Asian participants mainly because of product design, which is the country's leading competitive edge."

Bersa explained that buyers favored Philippine products for the IFFT for their visual appeal, functionality and natural appearance.

Zuellig sells stake in Interphil

LOCAL PHARMACEUTICAL FIRM ZUELLIG Pharma Corp. has sold its 31 percent, or 1.28-2 million class B shares, in publicly listed Interphil Laboratories Inc. to a British Virgin Island-registered affiliate, Khaitabi Holdings Ltd., the company said in a disclosure.

Zuellig Pharma Corp. is affiliated with Zuellig Pharma, the leading distributor of healthcare and pharmaceutical products across Asia.

Interphil last closed at ₱2 centavos a share.

According to Interphil, Khaitabi is a subsidiary of the Zuellig Group Inc., whose businesses span healthcare and pharmaceuticals, agribusiness manufacturing and distribution, agricultural equipment supply and commodities trading, and properties.

Interphil said that it needs to lower its manpower costs and cut its operating expenses to make it more profitable.

Khaitabi, among other things will undertake the restructuring and rationalization of Interphil's business, including the expansion of its activities in the area of generic pharmaceutical products manufacturing, the company said in its disclosure. These activities are supposed to help Interphil post a turnaround in profit.

In any of the first nine months, Interphil recorded a net loss of P48.9 million against losses of P126.5 million in the same period in 2005. — Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Shares close flat

"The market remains in a consolidation phase in the absence of new leads," said Luis Limlingan of Philippine Equities.

Investors believe the central bank is now biased toward policy easing, but they are divided as to when a rate cut will be implemented.

"Easing inflation and a firmer peso suggest that the central bank now has flexibility in monetary policy," Singapore-based DBS Bank said in a market note. — AFP

Disclosures

LAETUS Dilinila Calangi has resigned as compliance officer of Atlantic Trust Investment Inc. in order to avoid any possible conflicts with her duties as legal counsel and corporate secretary of the company. Majid Rahim has been appointed as the acting compliance officer by chief operating officer Jonathan Dee.

***

CITISECURITIES.COM Inc. has disclosed the acquisition of 60,000 shares by vice president Mary J. Bautista for P6.26 each on Dec. 13, via wife Katherine A. Bautista also acquired 30,000 shares on the same date for the same price.

***

A. Soriano Corp. has disclosed the purchase of 500,000 shares by wholly-owned subsidiary Anscor Consolidated Corp. for ₱7.85 each on Dec. 13. — Compiled by Kate Pedrick, Inquirer Research

Oil company commissions double-hull fuel transport

By Abigail L. Ho

TO PREVENT ANOTHER MASSIVE OIL spill from happening, Filipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. has chartered a brand new double-hull vessel to convey its inter-island fuel transport requirements.

Touting the blessing and commissioning of the MT Petro Cara yesterday, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the use of double-hull vessels would minimize the incidence of oil spills in the country.

"We are happy that Shell has been able to acquire the services of this vessel," Lotilla said. "This will ensure the safety of the transport of oil products."

Unlike single-hull or single-skin tankers, double-hull or double-skin tankers can withstand single-crisis and ensure that no fuel will leak from its cargo hold even if it sinks.

"Double-hulls are significantly safer than single-hulls in terms of maintaining the cargo integrity and preventing or minimizing spillage and associated marine pollution in the event of an accident," Shell said in a statement issued during yesterday's ceremonies.

"In case of grounding or collision wherein the outer hull is penetrated, the damage is likely to be limited to seawater flooding of the duct. He hull, while cargo-carrying tanks areas of the ship remain intact," the oil firm added. "Thus, the implementation of the double hull regulation in the Philippines is a significant step towards ensuring the protection of the environment."

Tankers carrying heavy-grade liquid fuels or toxic materials are required to have double hulls by 2015, according to the United Nations' International Maritime Organization.

Here in the country, President Macapagal-Arroyo accelerated the deadline for the double-hull requirement to 2006.

To enable local vessel owners to comply with this requirement, Lotilla said the Department of Energy of the Philippines would offer a loan facility specifically designed for the construction of double-hull vessels.

The MT Petro Cara, owned by Transoil Corp. and managed by Transoil Ship Management Inc., cost around $11.6 million to build.

DOF president and chief executive Bienvenido David said Shell's new ownership of some tank applications in the pipeline for such projects.

Aboitiz wins . . .

From page B1

Gil Aboitiz would be officially declared the winner of the bidding upon completion of the post-bid requirements and the issuance of the notice of award.

"After unanimously weak on privatizing and transferring these power facilities to deserving bidders," PSALM president Steven Huerta said in a statement yesterday.

"PSALM remains steadfast in its commitment to uphold the delegated responsibilities set in the transaction documents for the generation and transmission assets of the government," she added.

She said the recent signing of a transition supply contract between National Transco Corp. and Manila Electric Co. would help PSALM sell more Sixpower assets in the coming months.

In previous auctions, the absence of a TSC had discouraged prospective bidders from pursuing through with their intentions to bid for certain plants, an example of which was the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power plant.

Almost all prospective bidders had said Sixpower's assets would be more attractive if these had power supply contracts for at least 50 percent of their capacity.

In the case of the Magat plant, PSALM once presided for asset management and also is now trying Positive Tanguisoy and PSALM was able to secure supply contracts for 95 MW of the plant's capacity.

Under the asset purchase agreement for the Magat plant, the winning bidder will have to make a 40-percent down payment upon the date of the closing date.

The balance can then be amortized in 14 equal semi-annual payments with an interest of 12 percent a year compounded semi-annually.

The winning bidder should also post a performance bond equivalent to 2 percent of the purchase price. This bond will be reduced every year equivalent to 2 percent of the aggregate amount of the deferred payments.

Apart from the down payment and the performance bond, the winning bidder is also required to post a deferred payment security deposit equivalent to at least the semi-deferred payment in the form of cash, cashier's/bank manager's check or an irrevocable standby letter of credit acceptable to PSALM.

Since 2004, PSALM has bid out seven Sixpower hydropower facilities, including the 3.5-MW Talomo plant in Davao for $1.37 million, the 3.6-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon for $1.53 million, the 1.8-MW Basi plant in Concepcion for $400,000, the 4.4-MW Cavayan plant in Sorsogon for $810,410, the 1.2-MW Lobo plant in Batangas for $1.42 million, and the 112-MW Ambuklao-Binga plant complex in Nueva Ecija for $129 million.

US retail sales jump

WASHINGTON — US RETAIL sales jumped sharply in November in a sheppers' send on a spread-ing sense that will reinforce the Federal Reserve's view that the cooling housing market has not hurt the rest of the economy.

Data from the Commerce Department on Wednesday showed retail sales gained 1 percent last month, notching their largest rise since July.

Retail sales excluding motor and also gasoline, a reading viewed as a more reliable consumption of household spending, increased 0.9 percent. It was the largest rise since the 1.2 percent gain notched in January.

US stocks were initially boosted by the news and the Dow Jones industrial average reached a record high, but profit-taking gained gains and the index ended up 12.07 or 0.09 for a modest 13 point gain.

"The holiday sales season has started in very good form.

"But could mean consumer spending growth of 3 percent or better, and GDP growth would be closer to 2.5 percent," said Richard Berner, chief economist at National City Corp. in Cleveland, Ohio.

US economic growth slowed in the third quarter to a 2.2 percent annual rate and many economists had expected it to fair further in the final three months of 2006 — a view challenged by Wednesday's data that prompted other financial firms to lift their forecasts.

"We lowered our fourth quarter ... GDP (gross domestic product) forecast to up 2.6 percent from up 2.3 percent," economists at Morgan Stanley said in a note to clients.

"Spillover impacts from housing to consumption have clearly been minimal to this point, as a sizable recent acceleration in real income growth has provided considerable support to spending," they said.

The numbers also endorsed the view of Fed chair Ben Bernanke, who said in late November that there had been little evidence the slowing housing market has had a negative effect on the wider economy.

Analysts had forecast a 0.2 percent rise in retail sales, compared with a 0.1 percent decline in October, and a 0.3 percent gain in retail sales excluding autos.

Sales at department stores and clothing stores were both flat, but gained a whopping 4.6 percent at electronics and appliance stores.

Reuters

Asia markets hike on US sales

SINGAPORE — ASIA STOCKS ROSE TO Thursday, led by electronics firms such as Sony, after surprisingly strong retail sales figures from the United States raised hopes for the key year-end shopping season.

Oil prices edged up nearly half a percent ahead of an OPEC meeting to decide whether to deepen output cuts, building on gains on Wednesday following US government data showing a surprising drop in crude stockpiles.

Financial bookmakers in London forecast the FTSE 100 index would open marginally higher.

Australian stocks hit a record high, South Korea's benchmark index jumped 2.3 percent and Japan's Nikkei closed as its highest level in seven months.

"Japanese stocks are getting a boost after the US reported solid retail sales for November, which prompted investors to expect stronger Christmas sales," said Tsuneshi Sugawa, an equity strategist at Shinko Securities.

Tokyo's Nikkei rose 0.8 percent, while MSCI's broadest index of shares outside Japan in Asia gained 1.2 percent early yesterday afternoon.

Sony Corp. shares rose 3.8 percent and cameras and copiers maker Canon Inc. gained 3.7 percent.

In Seoul, LG Electronics soared 4.1 percent and Samsung Electronics rose 2 percent.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 1.8 percent to close at an all-time high, with Qantas Airways Ltd. up 3.7 percent after agreeing to an $8.3 billion takeover bid led by Macquarie Bank and private-equity firm Texas Pacific.

The main indexes in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan all posted gains, while China's benchmark index hit a record high.

US retail sales rose 1 percent in November, exceeding expectations and marking the strongest growth in four months, suggesting consumer demand to start main support may not has held up even as the housing market suffers a sharp slowdown.

Coming after a report showing healthy jobs growth in November, the data weakened the argument that the Federal Reserve would cut rates in view any further weakness in the economy — giving the dollar a lift.

"My should over be too optimistic about the future course of the US economy, which is why the dollar bounced," said Hideki Takeda, currency strategist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ.

"There is a possibility the Fed does not cut rates next year but keeps a wait-and-see stance."

But many market players still expect the Fed to cut rates in 2007, underwriting the dollar's yield advantage even as other major central banks appear poised to boost interest rates.

The euro was steady at $1.3115 yesterday afternoon, holding below the 28-month high of $1.3193 struck earlier this month. The dollar, which rose more than half a percent against the yen on Wednesday, was also steady around 117.35 yen.

Sony leading surge; Australia hits high

The single currency was little changed around 155.50 yen, below an all-time high of 155.96 struck on Wednesday.

Japanese government bond prices dropped somewhat, much one from a short slide in US Treasuries, but trade runs spurs as investors awaited the finale of Japan's influential tankan survey of business sentiment on Friday.

"The market might be caught in a tug of war between losses in US Treasuries and bullish expectations for a new hike here," said Goldman Sachs' Kiyoshi Kurokawa Sunday.

Japan's March 10-year futures edged 0.09 point lower to 134.75, above a session low of 134.63. The benchmark 10-year yield rose 1.5 basis points to 1.620 percent.

US light crude for January delivery rose 23 cents to $61.62 a barrel, to add to a 35-cent gain on Wednesday.

OPEC meets on Thursday in Nigeria to set output policy.

Ministers from the producers cartel agree the market is well supplied, but some are sensitive, when asked demand in the northern hemisphere peaks, is the wrong time to cut supply.

Underlining this argument, US government data on Wednesday showed crude stocks fell by 4.2 million barrels last week, as imports declined.

"OPEC seems to be edging away from cutting oil production as today's meeting and delaying any decision until January," said Tobin Gorey of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Reuters

Qantas accepts takeover offer

SYDNEY — AUSTRALIA'S FLAG CARRIER AND national icon Qantas accepted an increased $8.7 billion offer on Thursday from a private equity group, a day after rejecting a lower bid.

For the world's biggest airline takeover, the Qantas board unanimously backed the improved price of $4.816a share bounce group led by Australia's Macquarie Bank and US-based Texas Pacific Group.

"The directors believe this offer allows Qantas shareholders to realise significant value for their shares that has not been fully recognised in (the) public market," Qantas chair Margaret Jackson said.

As well as raising the price by 19 cents, the consortium dropped a demand to be paid a "break fee" if the deal falls through.

It must receive approval from 50 percent of Qantas shareholders and still be reviewed by the government's Foreign Investment Review Board, which can block any transaction it believes is not in the national interest.

Jackson, who flagged her departure from the board after six years, acknowledged many Australians would be nervous about the sale of the national airline but stressed the consortium was not dominated by foreign investors.

"I know that some people will feel uneasy about this transaction. Qantas is an institution that the public love and trust but ... Qantas will still be majority Australian owned," she said.

Prime Minister John Howard said the government would be watching the deal closely to ensure it meets foreign ownership restrictions.

"I hope the Qantas we know is the Qantas we keep," he told ABC radio. "People like Qantas. It's an icon, that doesn't mean to say it's shares can't change hands."

The airline, which contains one of the world's most profitable for its size, is subject to a 49 percent ceiling on foreign ownership and a 25 percent limit on any single foreign shareholding.

Under the deal, foreign partners in the consortium, called Airline Partners Australia, will hold less than 40 percent with no single foreign investor having more than 15 percent. Qantas is currently 96 percent foreign owned.

The buyout would re-nationalise Qantas's international safety record, push ahead with an investment in 70 new aircraft over the next five years to increase capacity by 40 percent, expand its overseas services and maintain its domestic routes and share of Qantas affiliate Jetstar.

AFP

TRADERS Long and tall trade oil futures contracts at the New York Mercantile Exchange. The market exuberance signals from OPEC officials about the possibility of production cuts.

Toshiba gets out of music, sells to EMI

TOKYO — ELECTRONICS AND SEMIconglomerate Toshiba Corp. announced on Thursday plans to sell its entire stake in Japanese label Toshiba EMI to British partner EMI Group, saying that music was no longer relevant to its business.

Toshiba said it would sell its stake for about JC70 million and complete the deal by September.

One of Japan's major music and entertainment companies, Toshiba EMI is currently controlled 45 percent by Toshiba and the remaining 55 percent by EMI, the world's third-largest music company based in London.

Toshiba accepted an offer from the EMI Group as "the music content business today is less relevant to other businesses within the Toshiba Group," it said in a statement.

Toshiba EMI primarily handles domestic artists but also sells abroad in the lucrative Japanese market of some of EMI's top acts — most famously The Beatles.

Among its domestic artists is Japanese pop diva Hikaru Utada, whose first album "First Love" sold more than 6.8 million copies in Japan and 900,000 overseas, mainly in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Toshiba has been focusing increasingly on its energy operations and in October completed the purchase of 21 nuclear power plant maker Westinghouse from British Nuclear Fuels for $5.4 billion.

There is growing speculation that Toshiba, which also sold shares in Toshiba Ceramics in October, is now aiming to sell off other group companies such as Toshiba Tec as it focuses on its core electronics and energy interests.

"Toshiba is expected to accelerate this strategy from now on, making it different from its rivals such as Sony, which will regain control as a major pillar," said Eiichi Fujimoto, an analyst at Okasan Securities.

Sony, going through a major overhaul of its business, continues to expand both its entertainment operations, such as video games and movies, as well as its consumer electronics operations.

Investors reacted cautiously to Toshiba's announcement with the group's shares closing down one yen or 0.12 percent at 771, while the benchmark Nikkei index rose 0.68 percent.

Toshiba EMI is now under restructuring due to a change in sales of music software, dropping in fourth place in Japan's music sales ranking in 2005 from second the previous year.

AFP

Former Enron CEO Skilling off to prison

HOUSTON, MINNESOTA — FORMER ENRON chief executive Jeffrey Skilling quietly entered prison, the final step in the fall of a man who once presided over one of Wall Street's biggest success stories.

Skilling entered the low-security Federal Correctional Institution here to begin his 24-year, four-month sentence for fraud and other crimes in the collapse of the former energy giant.

Having a successful appeal, and even if he came away off for good behavior, the 53-year-old Skilling will be in prison for the next 20 years.

Skilling and Enron founder Ken Lay were convicted last May on numerous counts of fraud, conspiracy, insider trading and other charges in the collapse of the Houston-based firm, which led to the loss of thousands of jobs, more than $60 billion in company stock and more than $1 billion to employee pension plans.

A federal judge on Tuesday denied Skilling's request to remain free on bond pending his appeal.

Skilling, accompanied by his brother, Mark, and wife, Rebecca Carter, arrived at the prison in a minivan long before the group's press conference of media without stopping, and walked into the prison. Skilling's family members were given a few minutes later and left.

The low-security prison, which sits on the city limits of this town of 8,400 people, 75 miles south of Minneapolis, is a medium security, has a low profile in the federal penal system.

Inmates at the prison have access to exercise facilities including a basketball court, running track and a ping pong table. Like most inmates, Skilling is likely to be required to work eight-hour labor jobs such as food service, plumbing and painting, which he would earn $1.00-40 cents per hour, the report said.

That is a far cry from what Skilling earned as the leader of Enron — more than $111.7 million from 1999 to 2001, the time span of the indictment.

Lay died in July of a heart attack before he could be sentenced, prompting a judge to vacate his conviction.

Lay "probably would have faced a similar fate if he'd been able to stand up for sentencing on the same day as Skilling," said Leslie Caldwell, a former federal prosecutor and one-time chief of the Justice Department's Enron Task Force.

AP

Nasdaq launches $5.3-B bid to take over London bourse

NASDAQ has formally launched a hostile takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange, setting shareholders a Jan. 11 deadline to accept the offer.

LONDON — THE NASDAQ STOCK Market Inc. formally launched its $5.3-billion takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange Group PLC on Tuesday, slashing the number of acquisitions it needs to take the bid unconditional as it targeted shareholders directly.

The LSE board immediately rejected the earlier rejection of the 1,353 pence ($24.26 per share approach and urged shareholders to take no action.

Releasing the formal offer document, Nasdaq cut the level of acceptances needed for the offer to become unconditional from 50 percent to 30 percent plus one share.

The New York-based exchange is under pressure to find a European partner until mid-January to avoid a referral to the Competition Commission — the New York Stock Exchange is close to finalizing a deal with Euronext NV to create a transatlantic bourse, including Goldman Sachs and Citigroup, have unveiled plans for a rival European platform of their own to challenge the likes of the LSE.

Nasdaq already owns 28.75 percent of the LSE after building up its stake gradually this year, but analysts said it was unlikely to win approval for the bid at its current price.

The stock is already well above that level, closing nearly at 2,215.94 on Tuesday.

"The trans-Atlantic deal between NYSE/Euronext has meant that Nasdaq is under pressure to follow suit with another trans-Atlantic manoeuvre," said David Buehlgen, an analyst at Bonitas-based financial research and consulting firm Cristea.

"The merger of Nasdaq and LSE is an appropriate pairing, however I don't see how the price of this deal would rise into the stratosphere," Buehlgen added.

Nasdaq said it will not improve its offer unless a rival bid is made or it is agreed by the LSE board.

In a document to consumers further on the change to the offer, which LSE shareholders have until Jan. 11 to exercise.

Nasdaq chief executive Bob Greifeld said the deal represents "full and fair value for LSE shareholders, taking into account the successes of the business but also the new competitive threats which the LSE will have to 2007" and beyond.

However, the LSE board swiftly rejected last month's rejection of the offer, saying it "substantially undervalues the exchange and fails to reflect its unique strategic position and the powerful synergy and opportunities" of a merger with Euronext.

The LSE said it would write to shareholders to explain its reasons.

AP

A POLICEMAN dressed as Santa heads out carolers to store shelves at a shopping outlet in Manila's Binondo district on Makati City.

LRTA eyes direct power connection from Transco

By Nico T. Olobuntha

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LRTA) has asked National Transmission Corp. (Transco) for direct power connection of a wholesale power and administrator Mel Robles said in an interview.

The LRTA initiated negotiations mainly because it wanted to trim power costs, Robles said.

Electricity bills for LRT Line 1 (Monumento to Baclaran) and Line 2 (Recto to Santolan) can be a combined P600 million a year, he said.

Robles said a direct connection to Transco would also ensure uninterrupted power supply during emergencies.

The LRTA is also considering tying up with independent power producers for supplementary power on a per-use basis.

Under this set-up, LRTA would maintain its regular connection with Manila Electric Co., but will be able to switch to power from independent producers if needed.

Another option being considered is to generate its own power.

"In the meantime, the most cost-effective seems to be a direct connection with Transco," Robles said.

"Transco is very receptive and we might have our own substation ... we can push through with this arrangement."

Despite higher revenues and government subsidy, the LRTA suffered ballooning losses due to surging power costs.

The rail authority posted P1.364 billion in net revenues from January to September this year but power expenses ate up revenues.

LRTA's power bill swelled more than P540 million in as of September—P234 million for Line 1 and P306 million for Line 2.

The power bill rose from P600 million for both lines during the same period last year. However, then P180 million was paid for Line 1 and about P416 million for Line 2.

Subsidies reached only P321.611 million as of Sept. 30 this year, resulting in a net loss of P147 million for Line 1 and P769 million for Line 2.

RP sells raw sugar to US

By Roncesvalles Domingo

THE PHILIPPINES SUCCESSFULLY shipped out 50,000 metric tons of raw sugar to the United States as part of Washington's efforts to stabilize supply in the wake of hurricanes that devastated the sugar-producing states.

Ms. Victoria Magsaysay, vice president of state-run Philippine International Trading Corp., said the sugar was sent out in exchange for 49,971 MT of American refined sugar brought in at one time under a swap program between Washington and Manila.

The exchange was made through Memorandum Order No. 206 which Malacañang issued last Feb. 23.

Magsaysay said the swap was made last September, through eight local firms accredited by the Sugar Regulatory Authority.

"PITC is the agency that implements the sugar swap program in coordination with the SRA and the domestic sugar industry," she explained.

Tasked to facilitate the government's commercial services, PITC earned P5.5 million from the deal for charging a P.9 centavo fee on each bag of sugar shipped to the United States.

Magsaysay said domestic supply would not be adversely affected since the outbound cargo was replaced with roughly the same volume of refined sugar.

The United States had increased Philippine quota by 68,000 MT to round off 2,816,435 MT but SRA officials focused on the raw sugar shipments.

Businessmen Antonio and Rita Juan Jose Ledesma Araneta ran sugar production, prompting an increase on quotas for import-sensitive like the Philippines, which in this source by-way of preferential to above-market rates.

The SRA had expressed confidence that through a properly implemented swap program, the country would be able to ship out this year to raise 200,000 MT.

RP seen . . .

From page B1

and thriving domestic consumption and demand for exports...rose in the middle of the pack, ahead of Thailand's 4.9 percent and behind's 5.2 percent, and trailing Malaysia's 5.7 percent and Vietnam's 8.1 percent.

The picture remains roughly the same in 2007 when the country places ahead of Thailand's 4.9 percent and Malaysia's 5.2 percent and Task Force says 5.6 percent and Vietnam's 8.4 percent.

In terms of inflation, the Philippines is cited as middle ground in the meantime to grow by 5.7 percent and 6.1 percent this year and the same than the 6.2 percent posted in 2005.

BSP-Arao said private consumption, which accounted for 66 percent of total income growth in 2006 also bodes well for 2007 due to rising base household income and to a sustained increase in remittances from migrant workers.

Also, exports continued to be a growth driver for the country as figures increased by as much as 16.4 percent in the nine months to September.

However, export growth would be dampened in 2007 as demand from major importing markets slide amid a downturn in their economies.

Next year, remittances from OFWs are expected to increase further, leading to the growth of private consumption by 4.9 percent while government consumption is expected to increase by 4 percent amid continuing efforts at fiscal consolidation.

"It is highly likely that the government will implement an economic stimulus package centered on large-scale public works projects, including transportation infrastructure, and that interest rates will be cut during 2007 given the sudden poor performance of both exchange rate and the consumer price index," the report said.

"Thus, confidence in both the government and private sectors will bounce back, after having been on the downturn for two years in a row since 2005," it added. "Consequently, total investment, which registered a net decrease of 1.8 percent in 2006, is forecast to return to a positive growth rate of 3.1 percent in 2007/1.

People, Events & Products

Edna Antes Espinosa

Traditional Noche Buena feast at the Julius Maggi Kitchen

IN CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONAL holiday dishes passed on from one generation to another, the Julius Maggi Kitchen (JMK) is offering a series of cooking demos for Nestlé Club members on Heritage Christmas Cooking this December. JMK's famed chef will give well-loved recipes for Noche Buena and cooking tips to create Bundt with a delicious crust, perfectly roasted turkey with juicy aroma, and melts-in-your-mouth leche flan. Attend this activity and get to share your family's secret methods and tricks in making these dishes more special.

In time with the cooking demo, the Nestlé Club is also offering a lifestyle lecture on Homemade Holiday Gifts where aficionados from Nestlé Cyberzone will share her delicious recipe and do a step-by-step demonstration. Start a business selling holiday items or serve it with queso de bola, Spanish bar chocolates and rosary pandesal for your family.

The Julius Maggi Kitchen continues to offer culture and promos for Nestlé Club members! Be the first to arrive with the most number of friends who are not yet members and win exciting prizes in the Member-Get-Member (MGM) Promo. All members may also join the Lucky Member Raffle. An activity exclusive for current Nestlé Club members, Me first Nestlé Recipe lets you share your very own specialty recipe using any Nestlé product/s for a chance to present it to the next cooking demo! Submit your entries complete with your name, address, contact numbers, e-mail, and photo to Nestlé Consumer Services via e-mail at Consumer.Services@ph.nestle.com, fax at 897-6067, or hand mail to Consumer Services, Nestlé Cyberzone, 31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

A session reserved for current Nestlé Club members will be held on Dec. 16 from 2 to 5 p.m. Make your reservations by calling 727-41.37 or 09.16-7586803.

For queries on how to become part of the Nestlé Club, call Nestlé Consumer Service at 899-0661 or fax 897-0967. You may also e-mail Consumer.Services@ph.nestle.com, log on to www.nestlecyberzone.com.ph or write to PO Box 1392 Makati Central Post Office, 1271 Metro Manila, Philippines.

PIDOD PASCUAL JOINS BDO 'ASENSO KABAYAN' LAUNCH

Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) recently held the public launching of its newest program offering for OFWs, the BDO Asenso Kabayan at SM City Calamba. Themed as "Investing in your loved ones Pinoy", the event is all-set to be the public debut appearance of Gen. BDO Asenso Kabayan. Program which are specifically designed for the OFWs and their beneficiaries. The BDO Asenso Kabayan Program is provides: Kabalikatayan: the convenience and ease of access to bank products such as remittance, savings, time deposit and other financial services. Pinoy Pasalubong: the special selection of BDO Asenso Kabayan Program, was present during the formal launch. Having the program's jingle 'Kabit Dapat' and serenaded the audience with songs from his latest album. It was an afternoon of fun and entertainment as the audience participated in the games and thrilled with the Photo Cash Dash which guests were given a chance to grab as much cash as they can in a limited amount of time. Selected beneficiaries were also given the chance to talk to their loved ones abroad for free for long distance phone patch. BDO Asenso Kabayan products and services are available in all BDO branches. For more information, call BDO Call Center 631-8000. Domestic Toll-Free: 1800-10-631-8000. International Toll-Free (IDD): +800-631-8000 or log on to www.bdo.com.ph.

SECURITY BANK HOLDS 1ST PRESIDENT'S CUP GOLF INVITATIONAL

Security Bank Corp., one of the top private domestic universal banks in the country today, recently held its first ever President's Cup Golf Invitational at the prestigious Orchid Golf and Country Club. Why it took the bank 16 years to organize such an event only SBC president and chief executive officer Alberto S. Villarosa can explain. This year's 16th anniversary celebration was the perfect occasion to launch the first President's Cup, in line with the anniversary theme, this event is another way to thank our clients for their patronage all these years," said Villarosa. The well-attended invitational tournament saw the bank's senior management sharing playing partners in and off the golf course. Among the participants on board were past SBC president Rafael "Baby" Zaragoza, mother of treasurer Nenet Cruz, Philippine Daily Inquirer chief Marlo Pribhi, wife husband Ann Pinto, Philippine Star columnist Alex Magno, South City Church Pastor Dan Listug, Kingdom Builders president Paul Tanato and Paramount Life's George Tu, to name a few.

KOPPEL TURNS OVER UNIT TO ARCHITECTURAL CENTRE CLUB

Koppel recently turned over a 3-storey floor standing unit to the Architectural Centre Club (ACC). Shown at the formal turnover ceremonies (L-R) Architect Francisco Fernando, Jr. of Arch. Bldg. Consultants, Fashion Hypermart's Executive Vice President Ruby Tiu, Koppel Inc. President Ramon Ang, Koppel Inc. Executive Vice President Ferdinand Ang, Koppel Inc. Chairman Emeritus Ferdinand Koppel, Koppel Inc. Executive Vice President Ferdinand Koppel, Jr., ACC President Arch. Jose Ma. Zaragoza, Koppel Inc. Executive Vice President Ferdinand Koppel III, Koppel Inc. Chairman Ferdinand Koppel

Teaching Aetas how to count

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IT'S NOT EASY FOR THE AETA FAMilies relocated to Bamban, Tarlac to make a living out of selling root crops, fruits, beaded necklaces and hand-made bows and arrows along the highway.

Their hurdles is made even heavier by unscrupulous customers who cheat the Aetas, patiently peddling their wares under the heat of the sun out of their hand-carried merchandise.

They take advantage of the fact that most of these Aetas do not know how to count and are unfamiliar with the value of paper bills and coins, and the proper weights and measures to guide their sales.

Realizing that it was to a problem to help, accounting firm Isla Lipana & Co. – a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers – partnered with the Management Association of the Philippines, the SGV&Co. Foundation and Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation Inc. to teach the Aetas how to count and handle money to improve their business.

Isla Lipana chair and senior partner Timmy Lipana told the business that by imparting these basic skills, the Aetas would no longer be cheated out of the money they certainly deserve.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Accountants as teachers

Around 50 officers and employees of Isla Lipana went to Bamban in October as part of the "Kalinga Para sa Aeta" project, bringing with them Mark Bank cards and training sessions so that the Aetas can learn on the Aeta culture and what they already know about running a business.

Kalinga Para sa Aeta is aligned with the core principle of the country's oldest tax-and-accounting firm, which is giving.

Lipana estimated that it took the Aeta adults and children from 45 families just three hours to identify currency, add, subtract, multiply and use weighing scales for their produce, because they were eager to learn these fundamental skills.

Building skills

The volunteers used toy paper bills to help the Aetas distinguish one currency from another.

"There's no better way to celebrate the firm's 60th anniversary than to help transform the lives of our indigenous brothers and sisters," Lipana added.

Lipana said the company was so touched by the Aetas because they are indigenous Filipinos and they are not too far away from Metro Manila, making it easy for the busy accounting firm to travel during the weekends.

He also thought about teaching math skills because it is a natural extension of what we do. It is our expertise because we are, after all, an accounting firm," Lipana said.

And houses, too

Isla Lipana complemented the Math lessons with the distribution of school supplies, medicine and food and clothing.

The company also donated part of the budget for the anniversary celebration to the construction of new houses in the Aeta village in Tarlac.

Lipana said that with the sense of fulfillment shared by all who participated in the program, the sum spilt many that the project would continue, hopefully with a bigger participation of Isla Lipana volunteers.

There are more Aetas who need all the help they can get.

VOLUNTEERS from Isla Lipana & Co., the country's oldest major accounting firm, took the first step to spell the difference between ignorance and learning. The "Kalinga Para sa Aeta" project taught the Aetas in Bamban, Tarlac how to count and make change. Isla Lipana also donated a cluster of houses to the Aeta village with funds coming from the budget allocated for the firm's 60th anniversary celebration.

HSBC opens branch in Davao

By Doris C. Dumiao

DAVAO CITY—GLOBAL BANKING giants are finally taking notice of Mindanao.

Last Monday, British banking giant HSBC opened a full-service branch in this city.

"It's a region of fascinating diversity and incredible economic potential and I'm only sorry that it took us too long to be here but I promised myself that we would do this before I leave," said HSBC Philippines CEO Wesley Manning, whose term ends this year.

During the inauguration of HSBC's 20th anniversary here last month here, its sixth in the country, Manning introduced his successor, Mark Wakkinen who echoed HSBC's bullish sentiment in cash as its employees would collect their benefits.

"If they don't pay on time, the penalty is 3 percent a month or 36 percent a year," she said.

Companies are also allowed to pay in installment for as long as five years. Businesses in distress are likewise permitted to reduce their payments temporarily and then jack up their remittances once they have recovered, for as long as they lose pandemic checks to cover the depressed period.

"We don't encourage dadon on page as the results are usually not good. The process is just long because we have to wait the property and appraise it. And when we get the property, they get used it for us. It 70 percent of the appraised value while we incur administrative costs," Ortega said.

There are also companies that willingly retain their contributions but they end of in the delinquent payers list because, in their haste to comply, they end up reporting wrong SSS numbers and wrong names of employees.

"If correct payments are posted, maybe the delinquency ratio can now be at low at 10-25 percent," Ortega said.

Globe sponsors 'OFW Family Day'

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) FIND HERSELF home for the holiday season got an early Christmas treat from Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) and Globe Telecom through the "OFW Family Day".

A project of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the "OFW Family Day" is an annual event where OFWs and their families join together for an one-day celebration filled with fun, games, gifts, and raffles. All OFWs and their families were invited to participate in the event.

The event kicked off at the SM City Baliu, Iloilo City Dec. 7 to 9, and at Don Mariano Complex, Lingayen, Pangasinan, and Leyte Capitol Gymnasium, Tacloban City Dec. 9.

There were games for the whole family, including a rubber ranging contest. OFWs and family members who brought 950 worth of prepaid credits through GlobeOne/EDR or the Globe load center were given two free Globe GM and free IDD or SOD calls.

Aside from Globe, 'Wow Magic' Sing also lent a hand in making the event as lively and as memorable as possible. The Iloilo and Pangasinan events were highlighted by the performances of popular teen personalities Ella V and teen star Camilla Prado, respectively.

Further schedules of the "OFW Family Day" celebration are: Dec. 16 at SM City Cagayan de Oro City, SM City Davao, and SM City Cebu City; and Dec. 17 at Fortunated Kingdom, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

VISITED actress Camilla Prado signs autographs after her performance at the 'OFW Family Day' in Lingayen, Pangasinan.

JAV fundraiser set for December 16

THE 23RD JUNIOR GOLF ASSOCIATION OF Wilkes (JAV Golf) annual fundraiser is scheduled on Dec. 16 at Valley's Executive course. This annual event aims to raise funds for the continuous development of Valley's junior golfers via participation in the various junior golf events as well as continuous training.

In December 2005, JAV raised a substantial amount of funds that enabled the junior golfers to participate in the Junior Golf summer circuit in 2006. Notably, the JAVs fielded a team at the Junior Golf Association (JGA) Midwinter and allowed for the regular monthly junior tournaments, Bubbas at the Judges Open held at Casalaborg. Brian has to his credit a runner-up finish at Junior World. It is the thrust of JAV to train, develop and nurture the competitiveness of the junior golf pool and it is among its goals to further broaden the junior golf base at Valley Golf.

For 2007, proceeds will be used for the further development of junior golf. The JAV Junior Saving Items established only in 2006, boasts of a number of world-class players including Rainbow de la Paz and Ryan Silcoe today. These two youngsters have won major tournaments, Bubbas at the Judges Open held at Casalaborg. Brian has to his credit a runner-up finish at Junior World. It is the thrust of JAV to train, develop and nurture the competitiveness of the junior golf pool and it is among its goals to further broaden the ja-

The major sponsors for this tournament are Globe Telecom Company, team Spirit and Wilson Sports. Other sponsors include the Garment Group of Companies, The Home Interior Group, and People's General Insurance Group.

Should you wish to be a sponsor to this fundraising activity, sponsorship kits and tickets are available through Anselmo Lumagbas (Jonathon.lumagbas@yahoo.com or 404-4901). Entertainment fee is pegged at P1,000 for non-members, P1,200 for members. Junior golfers will only have to pay P500.

HIGH FINANCE PIONEERS

Today on Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), trading starts in Tsuna a non-gross-listed companies with prices per share of more P500 million, recently marketed the 7.5M common stock, by recognizing last prices transactions. Recently years, Founder Enrd Bernas (2nd from left) and first executive director Leigh Calderon (4th from left) were given plaques of appreciation by PSE officers Rene Cordoval, Fulmer de Leon and Lambrecht Mew. Moreover, by many, the Philippines has become a showcase for 26 cities in Tsuna as regards to that economic of trading and an average sum of P8,000 for members. Unlocal shares and the like, transactions make a investment mostly the point, the loans help the recognized and put more fund on the table and purchase other transactions. A testimony of its effectivity, TSPI has a equipments rise of 30% growing that the pesos conquest investment. The figure is most brighter than the equity fund rate of be put Philippines banks that tend to different individuals.

400 environmentalists, South Koreans to trek Pacific coastline

AFTER THE HISTORIC CONQUEST OF MOUNT Mabu mountain range of barren Province by Mabu mountaineering division and allied organizations on 14 to 15, Mabu Blue Foundation Environmentalists from all over the Philippines and South Korean students will tour trek the Pacific coastline of the province to help promote Aurora's tourism potentials and boost socio-economic awareness.

The activity, scheduled on Dec. 16 to 18, is considered the first and the most challenging exercising the Pacific coastline since the scenic side of the Pacific Ocean boasts of the longest coastline in the country, according to its main organizer the Mabu Blue Fulcrum International Association Inc. (MBFIAI), an international non-governmental organization.

Professor Leonardo "Bond" Guiu, MBFIAI president, said the coastal hike is exciting in the sense that it is fraught with danger due to huge rocks and imposing cliffs standing the beach besides providing a serene continuity to all-weather living customers.

Guiu described the trek as dangerous but exciting due to the presence of strange creatures, corals, and plants and unexplored islands, bays, and picturesque beaches.

Celebrated author and historian professor Joseph Dimalo Iloilo-Juárez that the late President Manuel Luis Quezon, a native of Baler, Tayabas (which includes what is now Aurora), formerly was so proud and fascinated with this Pacific coast so that in his vacation times often still a student of the University of Santo Tomás faculty of Civil Law he would bring his classmates from Manila to this coastal town of Baler (including what is now Aurora), Guiu's. Furthermore, these coastal hot inquiry of Dilasag, Dilaguidi, Casiguran, and Dinalungan, San Luis, Aurora were also the sites of the fierce battle between the combined Filipino-American forces and the Japanese imperial army in World War II during the liberation of the Philippines and the Pacific.

According to Christopher "Bobby" Guiu, Blue Fulcrum provincial chair in Aurora Province, the conquest of the Pacific coastline is a virtual "journey to the unknown" since no environmentalists from the outside have ever explored the coastal calm of Aurora province.

The participating environmentalists will come from the Blue Fulcrum Chapters of Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Cagayan Valley, Bicol Region, Central Visayas, and Eastern Mindanao.

Among those are Environmentalists from Rizal, Philippines under professor Israel Quibol, Green Highwaters under Irvin Trajano, Blue Bird Volcano under Sapay Ribano, Unica Adventurers under Edu Bollaqueragos, Antonio Mesia's Mabu Blue Mountaineers under Pedie Dadilo, Silang Mountaineers under Rudy Vargas, Noble Blue Native Guns under Donald Jacilla, Noble Blue Protectors under Anthony Ureta, Green Philippines under professor Rilmon de Colombo, Advocates for nervous leadership under Rev. Jeanel Nicolas, Mancy Boston under Randy Sison, and South Korean students.

Due to incredible difficulties encountered by TLT in some parts of Davao, Philippine Metrobank Corporation is experiencing a temporary disruption of its telephone facilities in its main office operations. The Company is committed to providing continuous service to its customers. We are working hard to address this problem and expect to restore normal service at least in January. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

(02)891-4111
Fax (02)896-2449 and (02)891-3602

Thank you.

Energizing the economy

From page B12

By 2012, oil production is targeted to reach 31.3 MMB, while indigenous gas production, 183,823 MMSCF.

The attainment of these targets will depend on the entry of investors and the viability of new oil and gas fields.

Eleven petroleum service contracts were signed in 2005 which would entail initial financial commitments of about US$233 million.

Under the Renewable Energy Policy Framework of 2003, renewable energy-based capacity will increase from its 2002 level of 4,489 megawatts (MW) to 5,147 MW by 2013. A total of 4,498 MW of renewable energy-fueled power plants needs to be installed up to 2013. As of 2005, a total of 721 MW of renewable energy-based capacity has been installed consisting of 895 MW of hydropower, 25 MW of wind power plant and 1 MW of solar power capacity. In 2004, the renewable energy share in the energy supply mix was 122.4 MMBFOE or 17.7 MTOE which represented 43.9 percent of the total energy production.

In its bid to become the leading producer of geothermal energy, the Philippines targets the installation of an additional 1,200 MW within the planning period from the existing capacity of 1,931 MW to 3,131 MW by 2013. In terms of generating capacity, geothermal resources contributed 39,292 gigawatt-hours (GWh) or 19.6 percent of the power supply mix and displaced about 17.7 MMBFOE (2.5 MTOE).

The plan envisions the increase of the overall hydropower available capacity from its current level of 3,219 MW to 3,999 MW by 2014 through the development of 40 viable small and mini-hydropower plants.

The intensive promotion of biomass, solar and wind energy resources will be continuously carried out to reach an aggregate installed capacity of 340 MW by 2013.

For rural electrification, a total of 9,944 units of solar home systems out of the targeted 12,186 units have already been installed as of December 2005 in Regions I-VII, Cordillera Administrative Region and Mindanao under PHER's Solar Homes Distribution Project. The project will be completed in 2007.

An initial assessment placed the country's wind wind potential at 76,000 MW. In June 2004, the Philippine Wind Energy Resource Kit was launched offering 16 sites for wind power development.

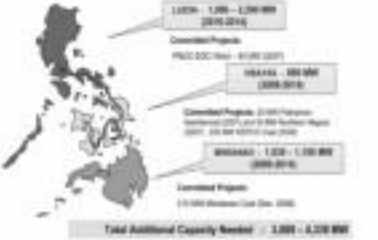
A milestone in wind energy development was the inauguration of the 25-MW Northwind Bangui Bay Wind Power Project in the Ilocos Region in June 2005.

The government will continue to promote the use of alternative fuels and technologies particularly in the transport sector. These cleaner alternatives include biofuels (i. E. coco-biodiesel or coco-methyl ester (CME), fuel ethanol and pinoy-biomass, compressed natural gas (CNG) and autogas.

As an immediate measure against environmentally costly oil prices, the Department of Energy will double its efforts to generate nationwide commitment and support to the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Program (NEEP) – the government's framework to promote efficient and judicious utilization of energy – which continues to aggregate energy savings of 170 MMBFOE (27 MTOE) within the planning period.

POWER DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Investment Opportunities, 2006-2014



Greetings

from

SEMIRARA MINING CORPORATION
(formerly known as Semirara Coal Corporation)
2/F DMCI Plaza
2281 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No. (02) 888-3000 Fax: (02) 816-7165

and

PHILCOAL

PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COAL MINES, INC.
2/F DMCI Plaza
2281 Pasong Tamo Ext., Ext., Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No.: (02) 816-7301 to 10
Fax: (02) 841-0913

Lt. Col. FELIZARDO V. SEBASTIAN

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on December 12, 2006.

He is survived by his wife, **Maring**; children: **Angel** and **Vito**, **Lydia** and **Cesar Buenaventura**, **Cora** and **Ted Zabala**, **Jun**, **Oscar**, **Roy** and **Carol**; grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His body lies in state at the family residence at 187 Pascilo St., Valenzuela City.

Mass at 3:00 p.m. at the San Diego de Alcala Parish, interment to follow at the Polo Catholic Cemetery.

DR. CHARITO DE LOS ANGELES

Has peacefully joined her Creator after receiving the last sacraments.

Her loving mother **Gloria**; her brothers and sisters-in-law: **Dindo** and **Bibs**, **Toti** and **Marilen**, **Tony** and **Bong**; her nephews and nieces: **Dino** and **Chumby**, **Tito** and **Rica**, **Malou** and **Louie**, **Jaime**, **Martin** and **Celine**; and her grandchildren request the prayers reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The wake is at Mt. Carmel Chapel, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City. Interment will be at the family cemetery, San Mateo Road on Sunday, December 17, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the site of the wake.

(In lieu of flowers, kindly make a donation to the St. John the Baptist Educational and Scholarship Foundation, Inc.)

In loving memory of
On the FIFTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
MENELIO B. SAMSON
July 22, 1933 – December 13, 2001
Camalig, Albay

He lives on in our hearts.

The Directors, Officers and Staff of the Philippine Microenterprise Development Foundation and its partner organization, Enterprise Mentors International of St. Louis, Missouri

convey their deepest condolences on the passing away of its Chairman of the Board

Engr. Romulo M. del Rosario

on *December 12, 2006*

and request the reader to pray with them for the eternal repose of his soul and for the consolation of his bereaved family.

Mary Lorenzo Go

March 8, 1921 – December 13, 2006

peacefully joined the Lord on December 13, 2006

Loving wife of **Mariano Go** (†); children: **Margarita** & **Luis Uy**, **Annie Go**, **Elsie** & **Patrick Ng**, **Virginia** & **Eddie Liao** and **Melchor** (†) & **Conchita Go**; grandchildren: **Michael** & **Charlene**, **Steve** & **Sherill**, **Gigi**, **Cheryl**, **Jerome** & **Rina**, **Erwin**, **Genevieve**, **Earle**, **Gail**, **Marvin**, and **Melanie**; great grandchildren: **Sam**, **Spencer**, **Luis** and **Shanaira**.

Her family request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Mass will be celebrated at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio Parish, 5th Kinloy Road, Forbes Park, Makati City, on Sunday, December 17, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. After which her cremains will be laid to rest in the Santuario Crypt.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
- Copy of Death Certificate
- Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

ESTRELLA FRANCISCO DE JESUS

of Dist. Cumarines Norte

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on November 1, 2006

wish to express our deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to all who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and condolence in our time of bereavement.

Wisdom, it dwells forever, the Lord is with you."
Luke 1:28

SR. MARY MAGDALEN de PAZZI BRILLANTES, RGS

(Estrella Amalia L. Brillantes)

On 13 December 2006, Sister Magdalen peacefully ended her 87 years on earth to enter the Shepherd fold, after serving Him faithfully for 68 years in religion.

The Philippine Province of the Good Shepherd Sisters and her family express your prayerful remembrances.

The wake is held at the Good Shepherd Provincialate, 1610 Aurora Blvd., Cubao, Quezon City. The Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on the 16th December 2006, at 6:00 p.m. Interment at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Our Beloved Father

ZOSIMO ORTIZ LEDESMA

Now rests in peace in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord.

He joined our Creator on the 12th of December 2006 at the age of 79.

His loving wife **Milagros**; children **Rina** & **Dir. Tony A. Nancy**; **Baby** & **Bernie**; **Leanie**, **Marlena**, **Wilanie** & **Boy**; grandchildren, all his relatives and friends request the prayer reader's to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on December 17, 2006, Sunday at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Novaliches, Quezon City, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His onlybegotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

People, Events & Products

Mekeni VP denies involvement in meat smuggling

ADRIAN S. GARCIA, VICE PRESIdent of physical structures and engineering of Mekeni Food Corp based in Mexico, Pampanga, has denied involvement in an alleged pork smuggling activity in Mexico, Pampanga.

Garcia revealed to the Inquirer a statement in a memorandum appeared Oct. 9 in this paper's People, Events and Products section. In the news item supplied by a public relations practitioner, the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) raided the Kaypian San Miguel and Cold Storage in Mexico, Pampanga Nov. 28, which allegedly yielded 62,000 kilos of meat shipments smuggled from China amounting to P12 million.

The article also named Alan David and Adrian Garcia as the owners of the storage facility.

"The information is entirely false," Garcia wrote in his e-mail.

Garcia also took exception to a paragraph in the news item that cited "Inside the cold storage, the operations was with Daniel and Garcia without allowing other people to get in."

"As a matter of fact, Kaypian owner Alan David requested all owners of the facility to proceed to the storage area on Nov. 28 to witness the police operations that day. Only representatives from Rod's Food Corp, Hanjan's Best Inc., and Mekeni Food Corp. (...) represented Mekeni Food Corp. David met briefly with the owners representatives and the police operatives, and left thereafter. I am sure representatives of the Bureau of Animal Industry and Department of agriculture-National Meat Inspection Service that time. It is in this sense that the True Asset client does not bring between the supposed investigators and owners of the meat plant' were happened," Garcia countered.

The news item also stated that two (2) are the name "Mekenai" as an alias. "For the record, I have never used 'Mekenai' or any other alias in my business deals," he added.

"As a professional, my transactions have always been upright and beyond reproach."

ROYAL BELGIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATES KING'S DAY
The Royal Belgian Embassy celebrated King's Day at the residence of the Ambassador on 3rd Penas Lands Forbes Park, Makati City (Nov. 20). The celebration was attended by the members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, media and friends of the embassy. Shown are, from left, Madame Martine Verdelet, lawyer Patty Rodriguez, Minerva C. Bolido, Assistant Representative, United Nations Department Programme Officer Secretary Eduardo Evasia, daughter, Tess Santamaria, His Excellency Gregoire Verdelet, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Royal Belgian Embassy, and Veronica B. Jimenez, FPDB Manila mayor.

PCE launches opportunities for OFWs

Job after working abroad has always been a blur for overseas Filipino workers. After returning to the country, OFWs are faced with the reduction of leveling with the quality of life in the Philippines and their savings make it to their and their family's survival? Now, OFWs can put to rest such uncertainties of losing their hard-earned money once they get back home.

This development is eased to the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) as it pushes through with the latest leg of its Gobiyerno advocacy for the year tagged "Go Negosyo Para sa mga OFWs at Balik-bayan" slated Dec. 13 to 17 at Market! Market! Trade Hall at B.H.S. Taguig.

"Go Negosyo Para sa mga OFWs at Balik-bayan" aims to complement the happiness of OFWs getting reunited with their families by exposing business opportunities to help them carry on with their blessings. The three-day fair, which is open to the public, will showcase binaise to equip OFWs in starting their own businesses and to train them for the continuity of their startups.

The more information, call the PCE hotline at 637-1047 or 637-9339 loc. 7107, or e-mail gosiopcc@yahoo.com.

BUSINESS

RP seen growing 5.5% in '06

IDE-Jetro points to surge in exports, private consumption

By Bernie W. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY is estimated to grow 5.5 percent this year due to "outstanding" exports and private consumption.

The Institute of Developing Economies, a part of the Japan External Trade Organization, added in its report called "2007 Economic Outlook for East Asia" that the Philippines would grow by a "stable" 5.5 percent in 2007 as demand from advanced economies slide.

IDE-Jetro said the country's expected performance was in step with the region's. 7.9 percent growth this year and 7.4 percent next year.

The study covers 10 East Asian economies, excluding Japan but including China, the four Asian newly industrializing economies (Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan) and five members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

IDE-Jetro explained that the forecast for 2007 was based on assumptions that the advanced economies—United States, Japan and European Union—would grow slower at between 2 percent and 2.5 percent.

The yen-US dollar exchange rate is seen to remain at the level observed at the later half of 2006, and crude oil prices would decrease by between 7 percent and 8 percent from the 2006 level.

As for the five Asian economies, the report shows a combined 6.4-percent growth in 2006 on roughly the same as the 2005 level, and 6.6 percent in 2007.

In 2006, the Philippines—amid weak investment

Making it Work

By Philip Wee, Regional Marketing Manager, Manufacturing Sector Solutions, Intel Asia Pacific

International collaboration on design, assembly and production hours become the norm in manufacturing business a global enterprise, this, the distributed manufacturing approach can already existing IT systems beyond their original design limits in areas of system-scaled, security and manageability.

Cost optimization is at the heart of this shift in an effort to lower labor, material or maintenance costs. Factories are being shifted overseas and because of globalized operations, manufacturers now need to be more aware of security, information sharing and confidentiality. They need to work with more dispersed workforces, with a greater number of vendors, suppliers and logistics companies. They have to be connected, functional, to scale.

Time to market for new product launches is critical to remain competitive. The recent upsurge to outsource the bid-efficient subsidies, thanks to the integration of OEM, has led to the need for completely new car designs, from smaller cars to fuel-electric hybrids. This has meant a complete remodeling of basic automotive designs, paving greater pressure on internal design teams and putting the likelihood of increased outsourcement and local outsourcing to specialist companies for designing some of these components. Internet design teams now have an additional role coordinating the various design teams into a Collaborative Product Development (CPD) environment.

The dispersion of design activity brings efficiency, but also greater security and cost issues. Whenever a design contractor daily into an external collaborative network, it can open up a window for illegal snooping back into the corporate network. Some design houses require designers or clients' browsers customers and suppliers to conduct security risk when they need to view designs. The increase in design complexity also lengthens the validation process needed to ensure the design works, along with the simulations and re-validations, which can stop from a few hours to even a day for each run. All these can be time consuming and costly, especially when done on a global basis.

Companies now operate globally on a 24/7 basis, with staff and a diverse set of equipment dispersed across multiple countries for business, making maintenance and support issues challenges. Businesses the only source of connectivity is via an external third-party network an additional security risk to the network. The proliferation of personal mobile devices, which add nodes to the network without IT department knowledge making them vulnerable to hackers into the corporate network.

Just to address all these, manufacturing companies with in-house health efforts® computing platform, Intel offers a platform level solution giving IT managers enhanced manageability, great performance, and improved security while helping save PCs.

The Intel® vPro platform processor is based on a dual-core design that offers up to 40 percent more performance while consuming 40 percent less power. The increased performance could translate to shorter design validation cycles which allow engineers to complete their projects on time and the product will be inherently better designed as engineers now do not have to rush validation by trying to validate the right versus the time it takes to validate it. This allows companies to launch better products in a timely manner in order to remain competitive and save money from the power savings or extend our time and it reduced validation time.

Companies built on the Intel vPro technology also offers built-in Intel Virtualization Technology (VT) hardware hooks for virtual machine support. This greatly improves security as CPU virtualization. Users can create a virtual machine for the purpose of OS1 which simultaneously monitors virtual machine activity to the corporate network. Any attempt to use the collaborative link to tunnel back into the corporate network is blocked by the VT hardware.

More importantly, VT enables authorized staff to manage the systems from anywhere over the world over the secured switching that maintains 24 by 7 global operations. The ability to use PCs that are protected by an inherently existing system (OS) is down or hung as it is connected to a network via either network or hardware software (network) connection. Finally, as well as remote recovery threats, resolve software and hardware problems faster, and/or correct error options.

All of these capabilities mean that IT organizations will spend less time on routine tasks, leaving more time to focus on value-added activities such as business innovation. Companies can now manufacturers can focus resources where they can create market.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2004 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B7

BUSINESS Friday

Last chance to get ready, set, shop!

A peek into what Filipinos are buying as gifts this Christmas

By DIC. Catalunganjr.

THE COUNTRY'S RETAILERS HAVE BEEN stocking up their shelves and stock rooms for shopping's shiniest season as consumers shake off the value-added tax and oil price worries that hounded the country earlier this year.

"The Christmas shopping season started late again just like last year, but we expect sales to be much better this year," said Sonia Lim, chair emeritus of the Philippine Retailers Association.

SM, the country's biggest retailer, a off but geared up for a big hand to holiday spending this year. "Sales trends in the past months have been encouraging as we hope that will continue in the Christmas season," said Jorge Mendiola, Shoemart Department Store senior vice president for operations.

Robinson's Land Corp., SM's main rival, expects retailers to be laughing "ho, ho, ho" this season.

"I think this year should be better than last year, primarily because OFW remittances are expected to go up 15 percent," said SLC president Frederick Go.

All three cite the robust economic growth in the first three quarters as a good omen for the holiday season which could account for as much as a third of retailers' annual sales. Lim says last year's Christmas was a forgettable one as the high oil prices, political crisis (holding the administration, lack of investor confidence, and tax jitters battered investor confidence.

According to Inquirer Research, consumption spending as a percentage of gross domestic product has been on a slight decline since peaking at 75.2 percent in 2002, hitting 71.8 percent last year, the lowest in the Arroyo administration. But RCC's Go said consumers have mostly adjusted to the increased tax rates.

Not only have consumers adjusted to higher taxes, Jeven Infante, VP of Pro-line Sports Corp., is leading wholesaler and retailer of sports equipment and apparel), says had nine buyers have likewise been moved to the high oil prices.

"We have seen a palpable improvement in consumer confidence even though taxes and oil prices are higher now than they were a year ago," said Infante. Manufacturers and retailers have coped with the rising costs by keeping prices down based on the down-trend in inflation rate—4.7 percent as of November this year from 6.7 percent in December last year.

Lim says manufacturers and retailers have no choice but to absorb incremental costs as well as step up their marketing efforts from zero percent installment plans to giving discounts on bulk to maintain consumers demand. The increase in tourism arrivals in the country, he says, has been a boon to the retail industry. He estimates that a foreign visitor spends on the average at least $1,000 during his stay here.

RCC's Go says sentiments have become a key factor for the resiliency of the retail sector amid the oil and jitters. Robinsons says that without the remittances, retailing would have been in a deep slump just like the economy.

LAST CHANCE B2-3

Fill in the squares to reveal the mystery item.

DELIVERY

1. FRE GHT
2. 2 O
3. LOGIST CS
4. Quik ash
5. boltiz

SI M PLIFIED

Clues

1. One of the services of 2GO
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Rellenong bangus for nocbe buena, anyone?

HOW ABOUT HOSTING RELlenong bangus instead milkfish on Noche Buena and pinapaitok na pla-pla on New Year's Eve? Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap is encouraging Filipinos to serve more varied fare on their dinner table this holiday season using more local produce to ease the pressure on chicken and pork whose prices take a precarious at this time of the year.

"We just want to tell our consumers that there are plenty of alternative food out there that would make the holiday season filling and exciting and they would be helping our fresh agri-culture sector," said Yap.

GOVERNMENT wants Filipinos to explore alternative Christmas fare other than the usual chicken and pork.

Yap gave the advice as the Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry readied for the anticipated spike in prices of chicken and pork, the main meat during celebrations in many Filipino homes. The Philippines has to import chicken and pork especially in the fourth quarter every year to augment local supply and meet the last holiday upsurge on roasted chicken and sweet ham. Yap said chicken importers have assured the government that it would keep prices at the prevailing market price of P95 to P100 per kilo.

"Kapitbisig bayanan' daw, they said' would be excessive," said Yap.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila says pork producers and meat processors have likewise assured him of adequate supply of their products for the next week. This should keep pork prices stable at between P140 and P150 per kilo, Favila said. Yap told consumers would help ease the cost pressure on chicken and pork by eating fish products especially bangus which costs only P90 to P95 per kilo and tilapia at P75 to P80 per kilo.

"Christmas meals should not be defined by chicken and pork only," Yap said. Both Yap and Favila said that while the government would intervene if Christmas premium or commodities "these should be reasonable and not excessive."

What's selling at SM?

At Our Home

1. COLORFUL and comical Santa door mezzle holders, P449.75

2. FINE scent candles with aromatherapy action exude Christmas spirits from Bright Moon (small) P139.75, (medium) P305.75, (large) P479.75

3. CONTEMPORARY table lamp with pleated design fabric head and chrome stand, P999.75

4. PORCELAIN dinnerware in Rib design, (small) P220.75, (medium) P279.25, (large) P328.75

At the Department Store

5. SET a limited edition Pooh resist radio, holster pillow (P599.75) and stuffed toy (P599.75) in celebration of Pooh's 80 Years of Adventure. Giftware exclusively distributed by SM Supermarket Stores.

6. LIMITED edition Winnie the Pooh mini radio with IO holder, P249.75

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On the tots' wish lists

At Shopwise

SHOPWISE shoppers are buying the Hot Wheels limited run, virtual pet stuff toys, Chicco rainbow hourglass Chicco rainbow remote control and the Chicco penguin ping ping for Christmas.

At Toys R' Us

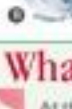
7. ROBOTS controlled and die-cast cars—price varies depending on features

8. SEXUAL Toys (on photo), Pure Basic My First Drum Set at P799.75)

9. PLAYSTATION Portable (PSP) and Nintendo Advance units—PSP unit at P13,500 and Gameboy Advance unit at P5,900

10. EZ Drama Bottles—P199.75 each

11. FISH Learning Laptops—price varies depending on features on the Whole Wonder the Pooh Learning Fun Laptop at P5,699.75)



At Toy Kingdom

12. CREATE your own flight pattern in X-Turbo A full function digital propulsion radio control with precision speed control and unique monorail that withstand crashes, P1,699.75

13. 60K POTATO Head, P579.75

14. DANCING Princess Genevieve (Let's Dance), P4,799.75

15. POWER Rangers Delta Squad Megazord, P2,999.75

16. BRIO Railway Diamond, P1,799.75

What's hot at RDS?

At the Robinsons Department Store

17. LIBERTE blouse, P869.75-P429.75

18. JUAN Mach satin blouse P699.75

19. BSB Holiday Collection striped top, P499.75

20. MARIO O'Brien wedge sandals, P799.75

21. BIGGGSAMA Collection, P799.75 each

HYUNDAI NAMES WINNERS IN THE 2006 DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), the exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, gathered all its leaders in its 2006 Dealer of the Year Awards (DOYA) at Tectro on the Square, December 3. According the event with "Set Idle" theme, HARI dealers danced the night away with the little steps of the Hyundai Idol.

Mr. Fe Peter Agudo, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of HARI, expressed her gratitude to the dealers. "When we embrace today's decade or so to carry out, we have pulled off it only by a core business of our committed dealers who are Hyundai's greatest ambassadors in Southeast Asia".

Among HARI's 32 dealers nationwide, Hyundai E. Rodriguez, Inc. Avenue bagged the 2006 DOYA as well as other awards in various categories: Award of Excellence for Sales in Metro Manila and the Award of Excellence in Service Operations. The Award of Excellence in Whole Sales in the Provincial category was awarded to Hyundai Cebu, Inc. Hyundai La Union received the Award of Excellence in Post-Operations, while Hyundai Commonwealth also was honored with the award of Excellence in Fleet Sales Management.

Individual awards were also conferred to the sales consultants and parts personnel who have exerted commendable performance in their posts. The Sales Consultant of the Year award was bestowed to Wilfred V. Rodriguez of Hyundai E. Rodriguez, Sr. Avenue for Metro Manila category and to Reinhard C. Sarmiento of Hyundai Dagupan for the provincial category. Abigail M. Franco of Hyundai Laguna, Inc. was awarded as the Champion Parts Personnel of the Year, followed by their runners-up Lolita C. Chua of Hyundai E. Rodriguez.

The Dealer of the Year Awards (DOYA), an annual event organized by HARI, honors dealer entities and individuals who have demonstrated key contributions to Hyundai's growth in sales, after-sales service, and parts operations.

'Can we do competitive intelligence that does not cross ethical lines?' II

FEEL IN THE RESPONSE TO A READER'S second question, "Is there a way to short list the near number of data your CIS requires or competitor capabilities as a way to predict a competitor's future strategy?"

We have found that the key is to have a focus. Here's the logic we apply to this search for a focus: "Instead of a competitor's physical, technical, financial and marketing resources and capabilities, one makes for a competitive difference and advantage without someone overbearing, navigating and restricting them." So what is the implied focus?

Know your competitor's face. Who is the brand manager, the marketing director or the marketing VP of your major competitor? What is he like in responding and in attacking his brand's leading competitive brands?

To know your competitor's face and answer the preceding questions, it's obvious that you have to profile this person's competitive style, to our company profiling experiences, we have found at least four competitive styles.

The first is what we call "the indifferent competitor." This competitor will respond to you with this almost complacent mindset, "I have loyal customers and they've stayed than way for a long time, As long as I do everything to keep them loyal, that's my best protection against any competition." So what can you predict about how this competitor will tend to raise tariffs? Most obviously and most likely, no reactions will be forthcoming at all.

The second competitive style is the "Hamlet" competitor. This one will respond but he or she will do so after a long, long time. This competitor's brain works like Shakespeare's character, Hamlet, and therefore thinks this way: "To compete or not to compete. That is the question. ... But maybe it's better to wait. In 80 percent to 90 percent of the cases, nothing really bad comes out of these competitive moves. In most of the time, I've better off waiting things out."

So what can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? It's likely that the reactions will come after a long period of time.

The third competitive style we've seen is in a "game, fun-loving" competitor. This competitor looks at marketing life as a game of fun. He or she expresses this outlook along the script: "I love this competitive game. That's especially fun when I'm playing against a worthwhile adversary who knows what he's doing. At first he sales, and I lose, but I learn why I lost and come back. Then I win, and the losses, the learns, and then he comes back. And the cycle repeats and afterwards, we both are better off as competitors than at the start." So we ask again: What can prospective about how this competitor will react to your moves? Most obviously, smart and sometimes surprising reactions will be forthcoming. Be prepare and be equally smart if not smarter.

The fourth type is fearsome— "the ruthless competitor." We say this competitor is fearsome because his or her competitive brain code reason out this way: "My response rule is simple: It's always better to overwhelm than to underreact or wait. My attack rule is just as simple: You don't just hurt competition. You come in for the kill. Annihilate the enemy." What can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? It's obvious—be extra careful unless you have the guts and resources to go toe-to-toe.

Are these competitive styles scientifically predicted by their advocates? What we've observed is that they change over time and according to the situation. Even an indifferent or a Hamlet competitor can at times take on a ruthless competitive style because of a traumatic experience. But in all cases, what you must now keep in mind is the basic proposition: "In dealing with the issue of a competitor's future strategy, remember that a leading competitor will usually do what he/she has gotten used to do in the past, shaped or reshaped, directed or redirected by that competitor's current or changed competitive style."

Keep up with emerging competitive intelligence practices and trends. To this, you may want to every so often visit the web site of "the Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP): www.scip.org.

Send questions to MarketingRx@philstar.net. End Idea/

MONTEMAY SETTLEMENT. Montemay, the country's largest meat retailer, recently received the Seal of Excellence in the Dapat Insert of Agriculture-National Meat Inspection Service for best and cleanest abattoir in the Triple A category. The Montemay meat plant in Cavite supplies 80 percent of the company's meats. The Montemay team led by Ben Jaymalin, Montemay Meat Plant manager (third from left), receives the award.

What shoppers are buying at Shopwise

THE TOP LADIES' WEAR THAT are selling are T-shirts in assorted funky prints, assorted shirts in hip designs, Polo shirts with zip closures, short-sleeved shirt in striped knit fabric, short-sleeved crewneck shirt with assorted prints.

Top-selling men's wear are low cost short sleeved round neck printed T-shirts, short sleeve hand- neck printed T-shirts, button down, solid-in shorts, naughty print T-shirts.

Consumers are buying consumer, too. At Shopwise, the bestsellers are Colgate-Palmolive's assorted cooking, L'Oreal Steel infill White, L'Oreal Pure Zone Clarifying Toner 200 ml., L'Oreal Visible Results Childhood Toners, and L'Oreal Whitening Facial Foam.

For accessories, Filipinos are buying Cartons handkerchiefs, Chinese bamboo fan, Super mini nylon umbrella, scrunger, hair are 3 clip, clamp and ponytail.

More best-selling items

BASKETBALLS continue to be a favorite gift

SPALDING backboard sells well in a basketball-crazed country

CHOCOLATE FONDUE fountain did well last year and is expected to continue selling this Christmas.

Retailing guru Santie Lim expects the Apple Ipod and other MP3 players as the hot item this Christmas. "It has the highest growth rate among electronic gadgets and is fast catching up with cell phones," says Lim

DIGITAL cameras like the Fuji finepix are hot items for cashiers on a budget

Last chance to get ready, set, shop!

From page B1-1

Metrobank adds remittance lane become a major factor in retailing as seen from the mushrooming of foreign currency exchange booths inside and nearby malls. "The second batch is here, earning higher remittances this year, and the larger deal will resume overtime sales," said Mendiola. Lim notes the dollar remittance-induced boom in the property market augured well for the retail market as "they would have to buy appliances and furniture to fill up their new homes."

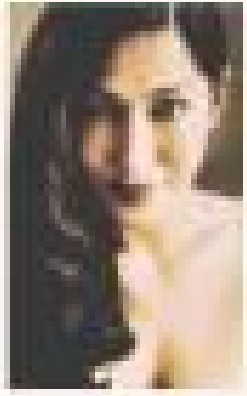
Robinsons Appliances general manager Marianne Joaquin is also the strong demand for OCR TVs that cater to the upper class which has been immune to the high rates and oil prices. In contrast, Joaquin says sales of conventional and flat TVs, refrigerators and room air-conditioners have been down by an average of 10 percent from a year ago as middle-class consumers took the brunt of the tax hike and the oil price hike.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chela Bandi Formoso

IN THIS ISSUE



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- **Layering** season /H1
- **Patrick Reyas'** makeup line /F2
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Radiant beauty philosophy

By Cleche V. Moral

RESPECT FOR THE WOMAN.

That, according to Dr. Olivier Courtin-Clarins, is the philosophy behind the beauty and skincare company Clarins, founded by his father Jacques in Paris in 1954.

"The traditions began by my father isn't to sell miracles but [to give] results to the women," Clarins said at the recent opening of the new Clarins institut at Ayanna's Makati. "Our service is to listen to what women want and be able to advise them on what to do specific to their concerns. We don't just sell them the products. We talk to our clients."

As a young man, it wouldn't've been unheard of for Clarins to speak about the family business with the same passion as he does today, as orthopedic surgeon by profession, he is a self-described proponent of the Cartesian school of thought, a perspective whose primary goal in his endeavor is to get tangible results. This is why he opted to specialize in orthopedics instead of dermatology, as would've been expected of the scion of a cosmetics firm that was founded, ironically, on the same year as his birth.

The orthopedic field, Clarins said, allowed him to see actual and immediate results—bringing his patients back on their feet.

It was only in 1984, on the his father's behest, that Clarins began dabbling in the company's research laboratories, but only on a part-time basis. It wasn't until 10 years later that he gave up his practice and devoted his time to the firm. He now heads research and development and is concurrently the company's managing director in charge of finance, spas and marinara.

Pioneer brand

Clarins has over 50 institutes around the world. The first Clarins institut in the Philippines was opened in 1999 on the third level of Ayanna's Makati. This was where loyal Clarins users got their regular beauty treatments—spa-inspired facials, slimming and body firming treatments, makeup services. After several weeks of renovations, the new institut has reopened on the department store's fifth level.

"Customers have become very scientific," he said. "We're very proud of our essential oils. We always want to improve our formulations[, but] remember we can't because they're already the best... But we have done work on some products. The Double Serum used to have only 18 ingredients, now there's 42."

Plants derived ingredients remain the heart of Clarins' formulation, and the brand is known to be a pioneer in plant-based cosmetics. While there are arguments that have criticized the use of plants in cosmetics, blaming some botanical ingredients for causing allergic reactions to some users, Clarins insisted this is a case-to-case basis.

THE PIONEERING cosmetics firm will soon introduce a spray mist to fight electromagnetic radiation from computers and cell phones.

Anti-radiation mist

"There are more problems caused by chemicals. Plant materials, so long as they're pure, are always better. We are the last because I try all the products myself. We don't sell it if it's not good and efficient. Some of our products can take seven years to develop. And the best doesn't always have to be the most expensive."

Clarins said the firm would soon introduce another pioneering invention, initially to the Asian market. Called Clarins Injection 3D, the liquid mist is said to protect the skin from premature wrinkles wrought by electromagnetic waves and radiation from computers and cellular phones.

Clarins has also formulated My Blend, several day creams and night boosters that dieters can mix according to their specific needs. This is his answer to the emerging demand for more personalized skincare.

"Women who are most of our products after undergoing cosmetic surgery. They are that it prolongs the results," he noted.

Clarins said the market for Clarins thru is also continually growing. While it makes up only 9 percent of the Clarins business, client consumers increased by 26 percent after the first year.

"They're learning," he said. "They know more cosmetics aren't only for women. Well, they said that about sun protection years ago."

DR. Olivier Courtin Clarins cuts the ribbon during the opening of the Clarins Institut with Nissa Tantoco and Ayanna's Commercial Corp. president Bienvenido Tantoco Jr. Like Ayanna's, the French cosmetic's local franchisee, Clarins is a family-owned company.

How to look your best always

THE CETAPHIL FAMILY OF cleansers and moisturizers is created for all skin types and is recommended by most dermatologists. Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleanser, and Moisturizers are humble here, non-comedogenic and pH-balanced. These products don't strip the skin's natural protective barrier that may leave it dry and irritated.

For Cetaphil, the most basic beauty routine is still the best way to looking good. This includes regular cleansing the face, removing makeup before bedtime, correct eating habits, a good night's sleep and drinking lots of water.

Here are some tips on how you can look your best every day:

You are what you eat. Junk food and sweets affect the skin's appearance and texture. A natural diet rich in vitamin, natural food, balanced in protein, fats and carbohydrates is good for the complexion.

Drink water your favorite drink. Water is essential to keep the skin supple, soft and healthy. Drink at least 8-10 glasses of water to keep the body's chemical reactions most fluid and has limited side action in the bloodstream. Think twice before indulging in alcoholic beverages as they tend to dehydrate the skin and might lead to wrinkles.

Catch some sleep. Sleep is one of the most important activities our body has to go through. It is during this time that the skin undergoes a rejuvenative process and creates new cells while replacing damaged ones. As much as possible, get some shuteye before midnight and supplement it with a dose of Vitamin C, which is crucial for the nighttime regeneration of collagen fibers that are responsible for making the skin supple.

Slap on some sunblock. Avoid the sun's harmful rays by applying a sunscreen or sunblock. The sun's rays result to premature skin aging or wrinkling.

Wash your face before going to bed. Although it is tempting to hump into bed after a long day, it is important to dress the face of makeup and accumulated dirt. Wash the face with a gentle, non-soap formula and then apply moisturizer.

Time out for Anne Curtis

RELIC gold watch with mesh bracelet

THE DREAM classic watch with floral patterns inspired by vintage wallpapers comes in metallic leather and suede.

ACTRESS ANNE CURTIS, THE new face of Watch Republic, knows that fashion is more than just having the clothes. It's having the right fashion sense and accessories to put everything together. Her choices of timepieces from Watch Republic's varied brands allow her to flex her flair for fashion.

Watches play a more important role than just telling time, she says. "In this business, being late is unforgivable. Time management is everything, and a watch is a very good investment."

"Watch Republic really fits my lifestyle and my choice of watches," she says. Not only are the watches affordable, but new collections are constantly added, giving customers more choices.

Watch Republic keeps tabs on the top-selling brands in the US and European markets and brings the hottest and hippest timepieces to the Philippines. The edgy designs and colors add a whole new dimension to any look, and this is exactly what Anne looks for in a watch.

"I love the Michael Kors line," she says. "Some are designed like bangles, so it's like an accessory, too." Another collection that has caught her eye is the Guess line with its edgy and eye-catching designs.

Watch Republic's wide range of watch collections and brands are the right match for people like Anne who want eye-catching, trendy and colorful watches that fit their personalities to a T.

Watch Republic has stores and branches at Power Plant Mall, SM Mall of Asia, SM Fairview, SM North Edsa The Block and SM Cebu.

GOLD Giordano metallic leather watch with crystal accents

TIMEX Mini Zero Ring from Accord of Scandinavia is a three-needle watch fashion statement.

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LIFESTYLE

ANNA Bayle

YOU CAN'T BE TOO RICH OR too thin—that's what people love to say in this era to explain their obsession with thinness. But you can really be "too thin" and die. The big news a few months back was a Spanish model's death, apparently of anorexia. She died at 88 lbs.

That death precipitated moves in Madrid to ban ultra-thin models, or to impose weight requirement on models—which of course, didn't progress beyond Madrid.

While models' weight is one reason we in the biz let ourselves barely survive the rigors of fitness, the obsession with thinness is not.

If there's one word our daughters [illegible] I love you and now I love, and there's Hanna Bayle who can't read their day without learning whether they're ugly or fat!

I love telling people a funny exchange my son had with a now-seven-year-old, whom my son was giving overzealous lessons to one time. "So-and-so, why he was [illegible] the boy said, "I wanna get rid of my belly fat." He meant!

If a baby could think that way, what about mommy? Sometimes you'll rather not know what they're thinking as they go through the [illegible], and I mean a battle of [illegible] power, liposuction, body sculpture, [illegible] etc.

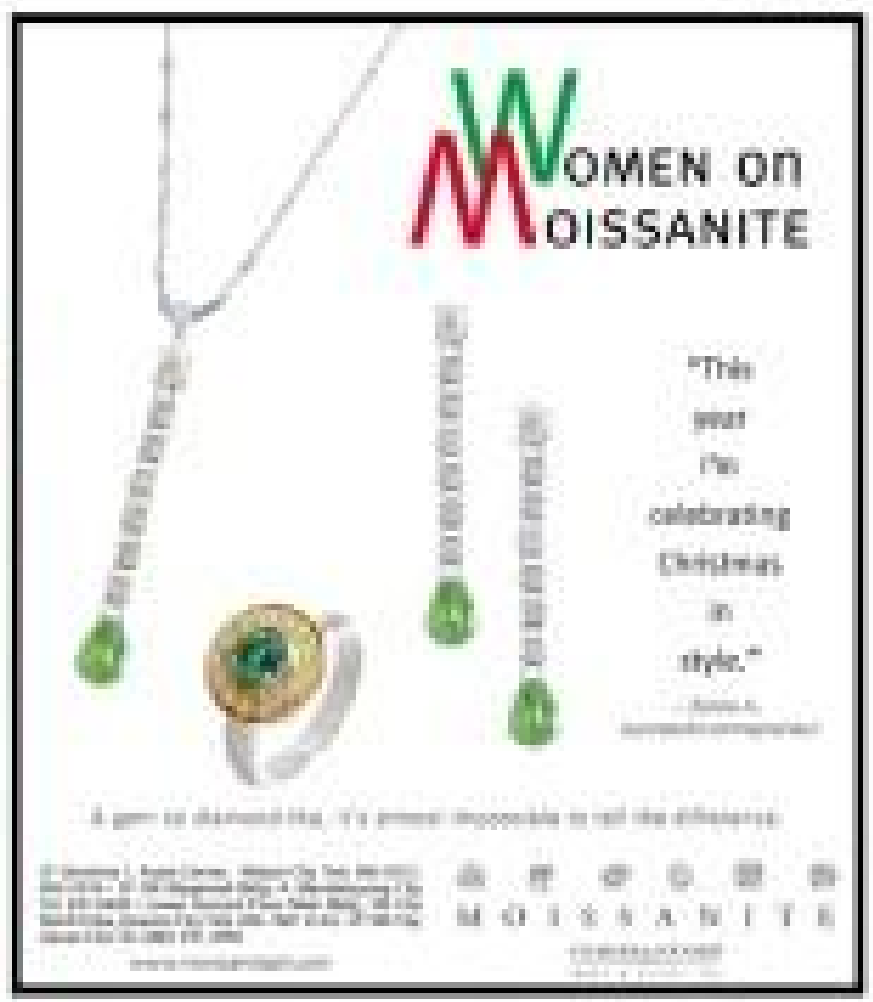
Cosmetic surgery, beauty and body treatments are a multi-billion-peso industry.

That's why I found interesting what New York-based Anna Bayle wrote recently on her website and blog (check out Annabayle.com). Anna, acknowledged by newspapers and magazines the world over, as the first and only Asian supermodel and one of the world's top 10 models in the '80s, has returned to the fashion scene. She has a well-read website, does reporting for Cosmopolitan and is packaging her own TV show.

She wrote, "Modeling is not a sickness, anorexia is." She said that at her modeling peak, she was 120 lbs. (at 5 ft. 10), and worked to keep that weight because she had customer demands to.

"There's that one number that every model will want to wear and there is nothing more unforgivable than you tipping the zipper over, especially when the women from the audience are thinking you. They have been on a big on the garment for three months and bury you cares, destroying their masterpiece."

Besides, she said, couture houses have a But who isn't? Anna Bayle talks about how models really eat



LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

So you're obsessed with being thin

management for each top model on which they fit the clothes, so she had to stick to her own measurements (around eleven). She'd watch her weight so that one time, while filming for Australian Vogue, she fainted just as Australian was getting pics on her.

But except for that, Anna said she and the

BOYSUNDEM

FRANÇOIS Gagnard, Airbus' head VP for sales, Southeast Asia, and Ayvee G. Tupaz, Airbus senior marketing analyst

JOERG Schultz of Rheinze Aircraft Leasing and Brooklyn Jansen of ABS Systems Airbus

PATSTAVP for corporate finance Grace Chiong

JOSHUA Cuenghong of PAL; Chi Jones, Figaro CEO; and Tourism Undersecretary Eduardo Jacapo Jr.

TEDDY Ong, PAL special assistant to the chair and CEO; Delia Moreno, PAL SVP, domestic sales manager; Jose Mari Chan; and Harry Tan, PAL director

JUAN Marc Barrera, Airbus' country support manager, and Luis Barrera, Airbus' area sales director

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo poses champagne on PAL's brand-new Airbus A340-300 aircraft with Co Andrew Tan, Lucio's fiancée Pitx president and CEO Dr. Lucio Tan, PAL's brothers Hans and CEO, and Jaime Bautista, PAL's corporate president and COO

PHBM Actors of BMP Pardon and Lucena Dehort of Cebu's Corporate and Investment Bank

DOMINIQUE Lubasenski, French Ambassador to the Philippines Gerard Chesnais and Honey Su Ly of Nike

RICHARD Lynch, LTP vice president for material management, and Peter Lacerna, BMP Pardon marketing head

PALS A-3/4 mid-air warking sweetness. Marilou Manaloto, Betsina de Vera, Cecile Pama, Cherry Lucero, Nanor Magaja, Annabelle Tan-Go, Jennifer Lim-Sarmiento and Kathy Wu

Flag carrier's spanking new wings

JESSLYN Tan, Kat-lo Tan-Kay and fore-profile Carmen Tan

IT WAS A GRAND EVENT, INDEED, when our pal, Philippine Airlines chair et ity 20 brand-new single-aisle Airbus aircraft with a big bash.

Held in the main hangar of the Lufthansa Technik Philippines in Pasay City, over 750 hondan GIVited by President Macapagal-Arroyo, gathered to witness the arriving-in-pe ceremonies of the new PAL aircraft. Ahhhhgo.

Joining in host around the globe were top executives from Airbus, Singapore Airlines Corp., Emirate Aircraft leasing, and foreign and local financial institutions, plus 200 international travel and corpo-agents, who had flown to Cuenca Blondo kal Lufthan Clic hospitality.

Mah hottest executives were led by Ch chair and CEO Dr. Lucio C. Tan, co- love Harry Tan, Estelito Mendoza, Gabriel Singson, Gaun Jimmy, Michael Tan Tiil, president and COO Atlee Bautista and PAL executive vice president for the commercial group Stacey Ita Ly.

Greeted by the fabulous, eye-catching ladies of Mahatao Silks, the invited were led into the especially decorated hangar. A grand stage was situated in the middle of the huge space, which served as the main dining area. Colorful Jaki and Ashley Flags and banners adorned the stage.

Especially eye-catching was the Airbus aircraft itself, at once brought to the stage for the grand celebration, where the President conducted the champagne-cooning on the nose of the aircraft signifying the official launch. pelanggan.

The short but fascinating program included a performances by Jose Mari Chan, plus, PAL's very own superb chorus singgroup.

The event also gave the crowd a preview of the astounding new features of the new fleet, including a 2,164-square enhanced cabin t that is notably fare for in Airbus current, and a new coastal themed interior design that brings to mind the country's picturesque coastlines, among others.

Apart the program, people flocked to the way, as coffee from Figaro and hot chocolate from Antonio Pinto poured endlessly and a lavish buffet of local d'oeuvres and brunch was served by the cre of waited Sta Mesa, natch!

Definitely the affair was one of the party references for 2006 as PAL, celebrated its 60th year in service with class and style. pelanggan.

New fashion force

With the recent release of Folded & Hung's fashion fashion event held at the Rockwell Tent, there is no question that the trend-setting brand has definitely become a fashion force to be reckoned with.

The event attended by the Who's Who in the fashion world likewise launched the first collection for F&H of Facebook Asia-ion.

Aurora surely impressed fashionistas with his understated elegance and natural sophistication.

Mr. Bautista, on the other hand, F&H's menswear designer successfully redefined male versatility through his designs.

Aurora presented key pieces such as bell-sleeved blouses accented with low neckline paired with flat shorts and leggings, and additional patterns on sweaters dress paired with patterned slim pants and studded belts. The look was classy, sexy and collected.

Host was the ever-accommodating president of F&H, Ronald Pineda, joined by the brand's marketing rider, Alice Harrison.

Business and non-business person Joey Concepcion with wife Marissa, Monchaw Gilberto Duldulao and Herman dhai and Marisa Hernandez. Samsung's Pete Bruger, Fresh Look's Dr. Lui Bautista, 40's Ayer Dr. Government Inc's Harvey Lim, Eastern Bus and Restaurant's Patty del Rosario, Sta. Francisco's Jung Balisacan, Toledo Shoes Roger Lim and AZ Tex and Tequila Boss's Philip Espinosa.

Divine Lee's dinner

A fabulous fun climax fooled by that divine man, restaurateur-caterer Divine Lee, together with his dad, Sir dashing maverick sons developer Dolfie Lee, turned out to be captivating of super-cool pals. pelanggan.

The dinner was to celebrate the company's latest pet project, the awesome multi-billion complex GA Sky Suites, a hib landmark structure that would positively become the talkof building, the Globe Antipas.

Storyteller-ist, mega hotelier never another Enrico Sanchez bestowed in the outdoor, together was manager and corporate mingle-maker Joji Bingcang. Nitch Jugo's entry in corporate bringing, and Bengal is developing a multi-hyphenated career, it is on you!

The excellent Peyote dinner was personally prepared by Marguerite Ferre, who made sure every detail was taken care of from the fantastic floral set arrangements to the superb cuisine—like the fresh Philippine sea bass flown in by the women from Roxas City, the yummy mascarpone glazed asst duck, and Marguerite's specialty, the to-die lamb shank, sure bets. The adorable, solid desserts could have made you swoon with delight, dahhhgo.

The overflowing bubbly champagne kept the conversation rolling as the dinner guests interviewed Divine and Dolfie about the ambitious super mega structure they are building, set for ground-breaking March next year.

Presence were couple Alison Sumulong and her husband Sundar Francisco, the sure-cut Jessel Tomas Pelayo in Lolo, in tailored garb with husband Ronnie Valdes; Tudor's editor in chief Amben Sim Dhagat; my friend be peppered, Hopper Tambunlao; and my super pal, indefatigable art lover Monchaw.

Also guests Mimi Dalisda and adorable Treasure Chest of Gifts' assistant Jessel the cleaner as well. Asian Spirit chair Noel Oaney completed the chic select group.

To Divine and Dolfie Lee, the skies are for you to conquer—cheers, pelanggan!

Italian joura house

Popular Gen Jeans wanted us to a by-invitation-only luncheon at the uppity Italian strata of Shangri-La for the media, are launch of it's swanne new Shangri-La Mall store. pelanggan.

Upon the enemy lunch, we were escorted to the mezzanine of the brand new store for the Italian label. We were introduced to the hundred-some people from the East Ltd. in Hong Kong—Chairman Leon and Connie Wu. pelanggan.

Gen Jeans provides relaxed, effortless fashion with a natural cool-chosen and is an Italian brand with extraordinary heritage," Leon said.

Founded by Claudio Gentsi and still owned and managed by the Gentsi family, it is handled locally by Black Cat Inc. We would like to announce that we will be opening flagship stores in Hong Kong and Florence in the coming year."

Check out Gen Jeans at G/F Greenbelt 3 (tel. 7574870); L/F, Rustan's Makati (8122758); and 2/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall (6815656).

RONALD Poenia and and designer of the hour, Fruthalo Aurora

HYDNA Fernandez, Mei Mei Bautista and Alan Vizconde

RAYMUND Isaac and Joyce Jacinto

DESIGNER H. Ramos

ASIAN Spirit CEO and hunker Noel Oaney, a concierge eye-catcher Divine Lee, TV's Jessica Soho an of celebrator Karina Sanchez, Globe Antipas mogul developer Dolfie Lee, and Tessa Prieto-Valdes

FRANCO and Joyce Laurel

LA CONSING Lopez and Ines Lobregat

LENCE Raymundo, Lena Herrera and Miriam Quiambao

AMI couple Sandra Tantoco and wife Mary Rosario T., Rufus's Anton Soa-Diego, and Pepper Tambunlao

THE GUAM OF FIVE. GK Laverty Florence Chan; Brian L.; counselor Joji Dingcong; and GK's good-looking Rex Cortado; with our

ARCHITECT Aaron Mendoza and Phoenix princess Margarita Ananeza Fores

METRO'S Erik Chua and Lois Espiritu of Adam

OUR very own Maureen Dizon of Rockside Fashions and Wolf Cantos of Metro

HE LOVES GAGA! Luminaire of Manolo

THE HOTSHOTS of Gen Jeans. Lena Lotho, Sunbrand manager; Christine Lim of Gen Fur East Ltd.; Miguel Calderon of Black Cat Inc.; Connie Wu of Gen Fur East; Mike Arrastia and Paolo Tantoco of Black Cat Inc.; and Peter Pang of Gen Fur East, Ltd.

So you're obsessed with being thin

From page D1

other models are a lot. They needed it to sustain the energy for the daily shows.

What I found interesting was how Anna described the normal meals in each common house during fashion weeks.

"Models eat. Some of us could eat a lot," she wrote.

She recalled the weeks of fashion collections. "I would jump from one to next and check out what was good to eat. I remember Saturdays in Paris, one of the big days because you have such heavy hitters like Montana.

"Being Asian, even though I still had shows to do before Issey Miyake, I would always go to Issey's one where there was Western food and Asian food because they had beautiful bento for the dressers."

After the shows, Anna recalled how their agents would pick up the models in SUVs and drive to a certain diner to a restaurant "where we'd be treated to a long table of 20 to 30 girls. We'd eat full meals—entrees, pasta, main course, dessert, wine, after dinner drinks."

Anna defined a house diet model in a way only she could: "It is absolutely true that a long athletic body favors the clothes. It is true that the thinner you are, as a model, the better. However, eating does not cut it; it becomes counteractive. I think models should understand that they are in the beauty business. Intentional, decidual, controversial. It does not make them beautiful. It is the elegance, the energy, their personal wellbeing that makes them beautiful.

So take it from Anna Sui. All the great models are—from Jerry Hall to Cindy Crawford.

"After all, it is only fashion; it is not something to die for," Anna Sui said.

Marcy's homecoming

From now New Yorker we go to another Marcy model. Today's fashionistas would hardly know Marcy for he left the country more than 30 years ago. We stumbled into this pretty affable man only last month, through Linda Gray, his friend of 30 years. The last time we saw him was last week at Shalit Gyang's fine (as usual) live elegant opening of Carlo Mollino's exhibit of naked nudes paintings, which are astounding to check out, by the way.

That was the last time, but Marcy died a few days after, in Bagnio, while with Cindy Crawford's birthday and Cindy's brother Mario, and friend Fulvio Montevecchi. He died apparently of heart attack. He was 64.

Marcy worked here in the 1970s with Pierre Cardin, then moved to Germany and finally to Paris where he became an assistant to Kenzo, which Kenzo was the toast of the fashion world, the first Japanese designer apart from Hanae Mori, to have such distinction.

Last July, he came home after a stint in a garment firm in New York, to retire here, and he said his family on Christmas, what would have been his first with them in three decades. He didn't make it to that day.

Last Sunday Lonnie, Cindy, their friends Mike Nesa and Olive Lingao-Ae took the boat ride to Laguna Bay to Marcy's small village on Talim Island, off Binangonan, Rizal. There, on a stormy afternoon, they joined Marcy's family and the village folk in the long walk to the small cemetery and bid him to rest.

Marcy was finally home.

STYLE says sensational, skeletal, cadaverous models are not beautiful.

Via, the scoop

I know what Vic Aganon was doing in the provinces on Cam Am, where he donated water to Remote Communities (RC).

He wasn't there for the Cam Am, he was following up a lead about the site of the Ex "Americal" Korea in Dasmariñas Village. (remember the magic flat) and wanted to ask Gloria Steinem about it.

He was after a scoop. He became the scoop.

Moisturizer with a hint of color

NEW REVA VISAGE TINTED Moisturizing Care is a one-in-one product—moisturizer with a hint of color—that effortlessly evens out your skin tone to give your complexion a fresh, natural radiance while providing your skin the VISAGE moisturizing care and protection it needs all day long.

REVA Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care is a comfortably mild, fast absorbing light mattifier with a special combination of oil-free, light reflecting color pigments that gives a gentle, long-lasting color. It evens out your skin's natural tone, leaving your complexion with a healthy glow.

Its optimized formula, Hydramin and Vitamin, perfectly supports the skin's natural moisture balance 24 hours a day. This special formula provides your skin optimal moisture and essential caring elements, making it supremely soft and smooth. For added skin protection, Reva Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care has the special UVA/UVB protection combined with Titanium E to shield your skin from the sun's harmful rays.

Reva Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care is dermatologically approved to be gentle, non-irritating and suitable for all skin types. Choose from two shades—natural and tan...to get the natural, perfect glow you want for your skin.

Available in all Watsons outlets, major department stores and supermarkets nationwide.

Hair and style

HERE'S A HOLLYWOOD HAIR TODAY, PRO cing the can-use tips on achieving great style.

Steven Lake has created glam looks for celebrities such as Dara Sidlan, Catherine Zeta Jones, Kaite Holmes and Jessica Sobhraj, among others.

"I'm sensing the grounds for hair that's modern, with the perfect balance of control and movement," says Lake.

Cream Silk has merged its expertise in hair technology research and development with Lake's artistic flair and understanding to come up with a complete expert range of leave-on products that style without stiffness and finish without stickiness.

The result of this team up between Cream Silk's science and Lake's art is the Best Flexible Hold Leave-On Conditioner, a hair care line that gives you style that moves.

"Hairstyles should allow women to express themselves freely with every move. Cream Silk Best Hold Leave-On Conditioner can help do just that," says Lake.

For straighter hair, Intense Straight Serum has Silk Relievers that straightens and smoothens hair with kinks, giving it a frizz-free finish.

For slicker hair, the Intensely Defining Créme contains Aloe Extractors to shield hair from damage while tanning fluffy hair.

For controlled hair, the Extra Control Gel Créme is infused with Amino Lysine to increase manageability and keep hair intensely nourished.

For fuller hair, Liss Fix Spritzer is enriched with Hydro Proteins to boost volume and revitalize lifeless hair by infusing weightless conditioning.

STEPHEN Lake

MICHELLE Branch

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Sporty, stylish elegance

Taal Vista Hotel: Renovated, Reinvented, Resplendent

Watch the fog roll in this yuletide season. Stay with your loved ones during our Holiday Deal overnight rates. Have the cafe on the ridge's December Offerings while cook and grill specialties are delivered a "must-try" and lively cultural shows on weekends. Extra special dishes & activities await you on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Have 2005 ushered in an Spectacular New Year's Blast - a countdown party you would not want to miss!

TAAL VISTA HOTEL

Dazzle and shine with the right outfit

HARMATT spaghetti-strap dress, Maria D'Ilaco clip-ons, ADS oval headband

ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT Store (RDS) offers some ideas to help you dazzle, sparkle and shine during the holidays.

A printed tunic dress and slip-on cute black tights will make you look chic for dinner with your boyfriend and his family.

For the office Christmas party, leggings with a matte stretch coat and a wide white satchel belt, plus pantacina and tight accessories, may just be what you need. Or go for a cuffed cut pleated satin skirt topped with pull-on denim, knitted chic cardigan or vest over plain tees.

Pairs with the gang by having the right pieces. Go preppy in shorts, and slimmer plain blouse and suspenders or opt for colorful or embellished super jeans, slim fit dresses, and bolero or mini tee over puff-sleeved tee.

For the family reunion, try a denim mini skirt and black tights topped with cropped gauze blazer and silky headband. Another possibility is a '50s cocktail dress or pleated skirt, with a lacy camisole on top and a mini vest matched with high-heeled slip-ons.

RDS brings a wide assortment of ball-o-hands and trendy items at reasonable prices to suit any occasion during the holidays season, or visit the RDS branch nearest you.

Robinson's Department Store branches are located in Robinson's malls, Pedestrian malls, Ermita, Galleria, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Sepo Mall, Pampanga; Dagupan and Puerto Princesa, and Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro. Visit www.rds.com.ph.

CANDY PINK and brown mix. Dorothy Perkins black tights, RDS headband and long necklace

CANDY-RED trench coat, Fab black leggings, Dorothy Perkins white belt, Jade black and gold pantacina, RDS white headband and long necklace

DELIGHT white party Peeptoe T-strap sandals with black crystals (P699); black shoulder bag with gold grommets (P895); dark brown lace cross skirt with belt (P195)

Bling footwear

GLEAMING gold for holiday feet. Black satin with gold and bow detail (P1,695); gold layered bracelet and necklace (P195)

ADDITY suit. Dark textured patterned blazer with brocade print (P1,695); silver clutch with gold chain accent (P895); silver wide belt (P195); bangle (P195)

THE NEED TO SHINE IS EVIDENT IN VINCCI's newest collection, with its metallic sandals, platforms and bags. Some footwear also come with golden rope wraps, crystal embellishments and studs.

Pointy pumps in colorful suede or patent or textured leather. Black or tan and snakeskin materials are also present from shoes to bags. Knee-high boots make a comeback, too. Wade creates its own version this time, with boots decked in brocaded python skin or brocade prints.

Accessories include gold and silver dangling earrings and wide belts to dazzle in or over skirts.

Wade is located at the 3rd Level, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center; Ground Level, Podium Fourth Wing, Robinson's Place Manila; 2nd Level, Time Wing, Robinson's Galleria; 2nd Floor Bldg. A, SM Megamall; 2nd Floor, Annex Bldg., SM City North EDSA; 4th Level, The Block, SM City North EDSA; Ground Level, Main Mall, SM Mall of Asia; Ground Floor, SM City Clark, Pampanga; The Shops, Uptown, Bonifacio, Ground Floor, Ayala Mall, Avenues Center; Ground Floor, Gaisano Mall of Davao.

SNAKE charmer. White python skin cross over shoe and handle (P699); white pointed snakeskin pumps (P1,199); multi-colored metal bangles (P 199 each); stainless metal dressy earrings (P 595)

Executive dressing

THE TOTAL corporate look of Walt Disney

SINCE 1995, WALL Street has provided business dressing for the corporate men, offering a complete line of executive apparel.

Its crisp cotton dress shirts come in the latest colors and styles, sizing anywhere from S, wide variety of neckties and even office lounge to spruce up every business encounter.

Wall Street is available at SM, Robinson's, The Landmark and other stores in key cities.

WALL Street businessman clothing combines fashion and function.

Leaf's Holiday fashion

LEAF IS THE BRAND NAME OF a line of ready-to-wear fashion merchandise created by three unique native and creative young women in September 2006: Trina Francesca Medina, Cecile Capinpuan-Dalisdis and Dana Lynn Chua.

Leaf began by offering Limited Talents individually hand-crafted, fabled with specialty ribbons, buttons, patches, cord, sequins, beads and other materials.

Today, Leaf has two ready-to-wear stores in Ilimite Manila (at SMX Avenue, 3/L, Robinson's Galleria, and 30 Shimcott Lane, Theatre Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center) and is distributed in Cebu City and Baguio City. Its merchandise consists of 90 percent limited tops, 10 percent woven tops and bottoms and 10 percent footwear, mostly geared to the young adults and stylish women who are in commerce domain.

The fashion labels include Shadow, polo dresses with adjustable sleeves; Hannah, halter tunics with leggings; Sun, beaded, keyhole sleeveless tops paired with halter inspired pants; Bliss, beaded overlap tunics; and Brenda, sleeveless shirt tops.

Check out the latest functional fashion trends at Leaf, SMX Ave., 3/L, Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas Center, tel. 6356499; or at 35 Shimcott Lane, Theatre Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center. Email leaf_phil@yahoo.com or visit www.leaf-fashion-house.com

ACTRESS Jackie Lou Blanco wearing Hannah halter tunics with leggings

Classy, trendy, fashionable footwear

FINDING THE PERFECT OUTFIT FOR PARTYing this season means having the right pair of shoes.

If you are a woman, the J.Lo Collection may be the thing for you when you are opting for class and glitz. The beaded front panels with colorful detail and metal center stud of Astro will surely complement the sparkling look.

Athena Alexander's Bodie will also go well with the glamour and shine with its stunning jewel details. Trinity has sequin-adorned upper.

Of course, you can never go wrong with the classic shoe design. Ghirardelli's Dapper, Commit, Cuter, Memory and Chipper will be suitable for any occasion when elegance is what you are aiming for. Also providing a wide range of classic designs is shoes from a Hot chocolate. Mackery has muted embellishments while Prizm has a metallic touch.

The trend is dropsie if you are sure. There is almost an style is selection available to you. Florsheim's classic leather designs will surely go anywhere this season.

The designs are fashionable without sacrificing comfort. This is also what Athena Alexander Shoes aim for...comfortable but fashionable.

The shoes are exclusively distributed by Retail Specialist, Inc. and are available at shops located in Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center; Glorietta 3, Ayala Center; Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Megamall, Commerce Mall, Alabang Town Center; Festival Supermall, Greenhills; Trinoma, Fairview Terraces, Gateway Mall, Atlantis Grand Cubao; SM Mall of Asia; SM Cagayan de Oro; SM City Davao; SM City Cebu and Ayala Center Cebu (032) 2317361; Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati.

FLORSHEIM'S designs are fashionable without sacrificing comfort.

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Robinsons Best Home Center

Go! Go!

Issued by Metrobank Card Corporation, a joint venture of Mastercard and JCB

GOINGS-ON

Christmas carols at the mall

CAROLS FOR A CHRISTMAS EVE. Glorious Family, orchestrate, high-spirits Pre, Reception at the main lobby of SM Mall of Asia. The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra will perform Dec. 16-17. Also scheduled to perform are the UST High School Chorale, Dec. 20; St. Scholastica's College Chorale, Dec. 21; the Ateneo Pueblo Salvaje Chorale, Dec. 22; and Sons Fashion of FJP in Cavite, Dec. 24. The Spanish Embassy hosts a Spanish Christmas Festival and Market at Sa Mercato Hall, Dec. 15-17. The festival showcases gifts, food, wines and authentic dishes. A Christmas Ballroom dance by Mango will be held 6 p.m., Dec. 16.

PEACEMARKET. The Pasig Eco Community Stand, with symbolic Peaceful Relationships and environmentalist Gremio Bautista, will perform at the "Concert on the Park" Dec. 21. Admission is free. Call 6021314.

HOMECOMING. Classes '81 and '82 of the College of the Holy Spirit, Tarlac will hold a grand alumni homecoming Dec. 30 at the College of the Holy Spirit, San Sebastian, Tarlac City. Call 0920-9450786 or 0917-4574870.

KOREAN LANGUAGE COURSE. The Department of Tourism is offering a Basic Korean Language Course 6-9 p.m., Monday-Friday, Jan. 8-March 6. Registration at both main malls is held at the Department's Development Bureau, 2nd floor, DOT Bldg., TM Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 523-1982/1661/1383/2891 local 182 and 119.

DOUBLE YOUR REWARD. American Express Premier Platinum Credit Card holders have up to Dec. 31 to earn twice as many reward points for every P40 spent in some 30 establishments. Participants include Apple Center, Nine Mountains, Prestige Cars BMW, Samsonite, Pearl Smith, Bliss, Gerbera, Levain, Frederic Sayer's Chocolate Institute, Komiker, Lauret, Nike Forum, Nike Women, Hato Pastry Sinaang, Sleepcare, St. John, Runners and Mountain.

THE SET CONTEST. Deadline for submissions of entries to the first ever tea and competition is Dec. 31. Winners in the contest, a project of the Tea Association of Philippine Porters, will get cash prizes: P20,000, 1st place; P15,000, second; and P8,000, third. Nine entries will also receive consolation awards and P5,000 each. A tea set exhibition and tea competition will be held late January at the new Commercial Hotel Manila Lobby at the Ayala Center in Makati. Date to be announced later. Also each team participating may get and at least two cups. A submission fee of P200 per entry will be charged. Call the Pottery Workshop at 2503660 or e-mail pinoypotter@yahoo.com.

THE ZONTA Club of Manila Foundation held a fundraising dinner dance, "Love Bonjour," in honor of its past president and 2002 diva star Nora Aunor at the Manila Oriental Hotel. Proceeds of the event will support the concentration of a livelihood center at Zonta Manila's GK Zonta Hs, a 10-unit, three-story structure in Brgy. Pulanlan, Marikina. Members of the organizing committee are (front row) Neocha Pascual, Lulu Castañeta, Diana Franco and Paty Umandap; (second row) president Gina Gerardez, Bacilio and their Baby Porta Siaca; (third row) Mila Lopez, Lorie Calma, Cynthia Cruz, Evangelina Dantes, Baby de Jesus and Sol Dizon.

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Makeup by Patrick Rosas —anytime, anywhere

THE MAKEUP logo, embossed on the palette, was created by clothing designer James Reyes.

The ace makeup artist launches his very own cosmetics line

AT THE LAUNCH. Rosas is flanked by (from left) business partners Vanessa Chongsiroc, Charlene Kong and Nikki Ng, and loyal client Gretchen Barretto.

By Cherche V. Pineda

THINGS ARE COMING UP roses once more for Patrick Rosas.

A few days ago, the makeup artist launched the first collection of his very own makeup line. Typical of Rosas, the event was star-lite, even as it was attended by some of his most loyal A-list clients from high society and the entertainment business.

"I'm thrilled, of course, especially as I'm the first of my generation [of Filipino makeup artists] to have his own makeup line," he said. "But you know me, I like to keep things quiet and simple." He had, however, tipped the success of the launch several months earlier.

Collaboration

Patrick Rosas the makeup line is a creative collaboration between the artist and some of his friends in the industry. It was the London-based Filipino designer Lesley Hicks who suggested a book look, so the collection's blushes and eye makeups come in slim white compacts. The designer James Reyes designed Rosas' logo, in red oriental-ish script, embossed against the white computers and embossed on the red faux snakeskin collection's edition box (red and white, Rosas said, are his lucky colors).

Longtime friend and collaborator Jesse Santos created the design of the poetic, meditative mix of an Oriental girl. Model turned photographer Joann Bilingrod shot the promotional images, while designers Jojo Llanes and Dennis Lardizo also gave their creative inputs. Clients like Bea Valdes and Irene Marcos-Araneta also gave their ideas, the latter suggesting that Rosas add a Japanese item to complement his foundation makeups in the future.

Creating the makeup formulas proved to be the most challenging part for Rosas. It was a real hard work, he said, though the eventual results were quite satisfactory. While the makeups was developed for him by an Asian laboratory that also makes cosmetics for some popular international brands, Rosas, who is accustomed to using top-of-the-line makeup brands, admitted the first few samples didn't meet his standards.

'Grade A' makeup

"I had to be very fussy since these would bear my name," he said. "I didn't want to compromise." The final products, he guaranteed, are up to his standards... Grade A, hypoallergenic cosmetics with a high level of pigmentation.

When three young women entrepreneurs approached Rosas with the idea of creating his own makeup line seven months ago, he said yes, but it was a half-hearted commitment.

"I got approached with these business pro-

PATRICIA. Rosas the makeup's promotional poster illustration was created by the makeup artist's friend, designer Jesse Santos.

posals," he explained, "but I always had reservations. I knew it was hard work, and I only wanted to do what I was doing."

But the women's persistence swayed him eventually. G-Link, owned by friends Nikki Ng, Charlene Kong and Vanessa Chongsiroc, last year introduced a makeup line for the young and trendy market. It was Ng who broached the idea of a more sophisticated line that would best Rosas' name, impressed as she was by the latter's job during her client's wedding.

No Rule collection

The initial Patrick Rosas collection comprises three blushes, three lip glosses and three eye shadow trios. The artist calls it his No Rule collection as the palettes are necessarily classic that will suit the Filipina's mercurial skin and also the Chinese and Caucasian's luminous tones.

"I don't have a fixed style," Rosas explained, "so the makeup I have created is a reflection of this. I can go from the no-makeup look to couture glam. And the palettes have are just what you need. It's just a matter of blending to create your desired look."

He agreed for a non-limited collection, said Rosas, because "I didn't want to go overboard by creating so much, as I didn't want to put my business partners in a bind. I wanted to see how the market would respond first."

His launch at Greenars in Forum's Makati expressly made record first-day sales for any makeup brand. Customers in the exclusive resort of the line, encouraged, he's now preparing for his sophomore collection to launch first quarter of 2007.

The makeup retails at P380 (blush-on), P980 (eye shadow trios) and P480 (lip gloss). Rosas said GIa is a classic for more Filipinas who couldn't afford his personal services—a sentiment the figure—to experience the Patrick Rosas magic.

Rosas said he only had three professional goals: to come up with a book documenting his works, to create his own makeup line, and to have a school where he could teach makeup techniques in Filipinos.

Many Filipinas, he emphasized, still have a lot of room to improve on when it comes to makeup.

"We need to educate them, to teach them how to experiment. Some are misguided that's why they stick to the same look. The approach should be realistic," he said.

"When I was preparing for my Skin Confidential book"—he has published two books, edited "Images" and "More"—"somebody wanted to model for me because they thought I was just doing it on a whim. When the first vote is cast, everyone wanted to be part of the second book."

"Now, there are some who come up to me and say I should've gone to them for the makeup project," he said, adding his eyes shyword. "But I'm really happy that I've created so many good relationships throughout the course of my career."

E-mail: cherul@inquirer.com.ph

Island living

Everyday escape is now possible with scents of tropical paradise so close at hand

OHANA GEL soaps for your hands' maintenance

TRAVEL-ready goodies

RICE bran oil moisturizing facial wash

By Carla Sibal
Contributor

AN ISLAND GETAWAY IS JUST a whiff away...thanks to the brainchild of Uncle Bimbo, a self-proclaimed tropical aficionado.

After several years in New York living on a busy 12 cork, twenty-hour, plus-time home to realize that those same products did nothing for scent have on his skin to one hot and humid weather.

Thus, Island Life was born.

After two years of research, product development and R&D, Uncle came up with an initial collection of 32 different formulations of basic beauty essentials.

Aside from coconut (into the last profound on herself) and tropical fruit (or aromas, the claims), the line collaborated with pharmacists and chemists to come up with high-quality yet affordable products that are wonderfully packaged in an island-inspired theme.

Road test

Working for a fashion and beauty magazine, I was consumed by (and spoil with new products.

I received a package one day from Tricia, which included her Gabbie Body Lotion, Bamboo Infused Oil Mist and Vanilla Coconut Milk Bath Spa.

Being obsessive-compulsive about anything my hands, the first thing I noticed was the Coffee Lotion for my dried-out skin.

Taking a preliminary whiff of the heavenly scented concoction, I was permanently hooked.

I was joking with Uncle that whenever I got a awful evening for myself, I just put a drop of his coconut lotion in my hands and take a deep whiff to submit a raging sweet tooth.

But since I've started using the lotion, I've since then left one on my desk and have gotten several other bottles for each room in my house.

COFFEE for the skin

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SCENTS from the earth

A few days later I was off to do a travel story in Connecticut for, coming along, Tricia's vanilla Coconut Milk bath spa and Bamboo Infused Oil mist to test.

With four other beauty junkies along with me on the trip, suffice it to say that by the end of the 5, my tub of Coconut Milk bath spa had gone missing.

The heavenly scented cream made for the perfect lotion to produce while we did our version of island-hopping through rain, wind, sun and getting drenched in salt water.

Proudly local

A graphics designer who has long been a resident of Manhattan, Tricia employs sophisticated product packaging, which however does nothing to hide at the wonderfully affordable prices of the products.

It was only after I was convinced that I liked the products I had tested that I checked out her price list. The average price range was from P150 to P200.

I was surprised that something this loaded and smelled this good would be so affordable (at reputable a globally appealing look that doesn't scream Third World at the least.

However, I was also aghast when she mentioned that there are still individuals who refuse to buy her items when they find out that it is actually locally made.

I thought that colonial mentality had died in the age of the discotheque.

Island Life, formally and figuratively is a lifestyle trend due to embraced and espoused by the world's most sensational travelers.

Entertaining designer Nicolas Ghesquiere was profiling about his visit to Palawan and had told me how lucky we Filipinos are to have a place like that.

Being a local, I never saw it that way and I had taken it for granted that Palawan has always and would always be exotic.

I like to believe that Island Life, with its local flavor yet global appeal, is somewhere like Palawan...and a gift I can share with friends I visit far and wide, scattered throughout the world.

Beauty shoutout!

I'm protecting the no-makeup look. Just put on good moisturizer and perhaps a touch of tinted moisturizer. Curl your lashes and put on a little shimmer. Be glam. It's called Tita Beauty and Tita Cosmetics at Liberty's. Be glam. It's called Tita. Is it Infrared rockmakeup product? Cocoa sea extract is known to use like Ashes Sea Beauty extract on our skin! I can't up with blonde eyebrows, and don't forget to brush your upwards. – Bianca King, Actress, Model

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Makeup gift ideas for different personalities

R2U08 Dior Replenishing lip color, P1,200

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CRICKET! She's my only sister and although we both love makeup, our styles could not be more different. She is no-frills Zen while I am all Louis XIV.

Besides easy be someone like her who is very streamlined or they may be like me who is full of drama. We the two classes of creatures, here are makeup products they may appreciate this Christmas.

For the streamlined woman, environmental is the Bobbi Brown Sparkle and Subtle Collection 2006. The streamlined woman appreciates versatility but does not like carrying too much stuff around. The perfect gift options by her in this collection are:

Shimmer Brick and Lip Kit (P3,350)—it has four neutral-tone lip shades that suit every outfit or skin tone. The Shimmer brick with multiple shades of brown, pinks, and beige can be used as eyeshadow and liner. It can also be used on the cheeks and all-over face as a bronzer for an instant healthy glow. The streamlined woman will ditch this one package in her bag, and after adding mascara, she is all set.

Mini Brush set (P2,600)—it is made of real hair and structured in such a way that application will be easy as pie. It comes in a mini blush zipper case, good for traveling.

For foundation, the Max Factor Flawless Perfection Espatul (P495) is endorsed.

MAKEOVER 911

Kirsty Salazar

BOBBI Brown Shimmer Brick and Lip Kit, P3,350

DIOR pretty charm in 001 Pink Enchantress, P1,900

One side is a primer with SPF 12 to blur minor flaws, protect skin, and make foundation stay flawless longer. Another side is the actual shade.

One great thing about this is that every shade blends into a wide range of skin color so not finding your actual shade is close to impossible. In fact I can wear both Creamy Ivory and Sand and it blends beautifully.

Flamboyant

For the flamboyant woman, Christian Dior's collection is suggested.

Every year Dior manages to incorporate trinkets with makeup. This year it is a heart-shaped silver padlock surrounded by Swarovski crystals, called **Dior Pretty Charm** (P2,900).

It opens to reveal a lip color and gloss on both halves of a broken heart. A tiny mirror where you can check your lips is on the lid.

You don't need to rummage in your bag for this as it is a bag charm so can always know where it is.

The **001 Magical Enchantress** is flexible with mauve gloss while the **002 Pink Enchantment** is a duo of fruity pinks.

Rouge Dior Lipstick has silicone properties that hydrate the driest lips, looks light and comfortable, and has strategic shimmer and rich color that makes lips look fuller without the cheap silky look.

The makeup is inspired by the fighting steel in fiery sets and tries to come up with succulent lips for the men.

Check out the Christian Dior concepts personally because although I loved the texture and finish, the two shades were so me did not rock my skin tone as I cannot rave about any shade in particular.

Such a shame as the packaging was very elegant.

Flamboyant women have some unreasonable expectations when it comes to makeup.

I, for one, expect it to perform above and beyond the call of duty. I don't mind smudging my powder lipstick and blush during an event, but I expect my eye makeup to stay put despite heavy sweating or a bit-bored member.

Make-up Forever has come out with a **pearly waterproof eye color** (P880) and eyeliner pencil range (P780). This is truly waterproof as it was designed for women who join water ballet competitions.

Of course, women who are conscious of their small Oriental eyes have even gone to the extent of using the black and bronze variants of this in Bowsey to make their eyes appear bigger and more deep-set.

It does, however, wash out with cleansing oil and eye-makeup removers so there is no fear of your makeup causing breakouts in the eye area.

I love the eyeliner in Bizzy which makes the whites of my eyes seem brighter and blends the monotony of beige and brown eye shadows, instantly manufacturing my day eye makeup into something more interesting for the thrilling evening parties.

Make-up Forever is available at 2/F Shangri-La Mall and Marionnaud Mall of Asia. Bobbi Brown and Christian Dior are exclusively available at Rustan's. Max Factor can be found at leading department stores, Watson's and SM.

You may e-mail the author at kirsysalas@yahoo.com

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Jenni Epperson
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LIFESTYLE

FASHION

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Metallic

On Monica: Miss Elizabeth skirt, P399.75; Redhead black long-sleeved top, P499.75; bolt net shawl, Dee square necklace, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P399.75

Gold

On Monica: Sigrid Nero gold satin shorts, P499.75; Bill Black tank dress, P549.75 (used as top); Alexandra garter belt, P1,695.75; Dee square necklace, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P399.75; On Nadia: Velvet Boutique gold organza dress, P1,499.75; Alexandra black garter belt, P149.75; Velvet Boutique cape, P349.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P399.75

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Jenel Eggleton

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Satin

Lace

Photography Ole
Assisted by Migs Cuaresma
Styling Kat Cruz
Makeup Mikee Reynoso for MAC Cosmetics using the Jeanne-Lorre Collection
Hair Yoyong Cruz for L'Oréal Paris Studio Line
Models Monika Centre of Mod People Model Management and Stella Cruz of Sunday Models
Clothes available at SM Shaw-stores Store

On Nadia: Velvet Boutique lace dress, P1,199.75; Boutique black necklace with lace, P349.75 (used as bracelet); Alexandra black patent mules sock, P399.75

On Monica: H&M brown nude shorts, P399.75; Pilot black dolman sleeve top, P699.75; SM Accessories necklace, P349.75; and P99.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75; On Monica: Topshop gold necklaces, P349.75; Miller sequined top, P799.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75

fashion shoutout

Bazaar festival

WORLDWIDE SERVICES INTERNATIONAL is holding the "5th World Bazaar Festival" until Dec. 17 at the World Trade Center.

The annual bazaar is co-sponsored by ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation. Proceeds will go to ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Ka-Bahay, an organization that promotes awareness in nature and advocates the preservation of the environment. Call Joseph Ramos at 8571116 or 8571118, E-mail: bill_clydecustomsbrokers@yahoo.com.

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Some wearables, some forgettables

To main page G4

and you. Shoes was little if any on sale in the veteran Dumpit's collection composed of soft, strapless dresses made of chiffon and inspired by the colors of the hibiscus.

Not that the pieces were bad. In fact, they were very wearable for lounging, perhaps, with Ocampo's versatility in an RTW designer. But the collection was neither new nor "trendy" to elicit even a twinge of excitement in our weary insides.

Salud's corsets

Similar parameters hobbled Salud's neat debut-but chiffon numbers that looked like miniskirts and waist-cinch corsets of mail to stand in produce the loosely queen of seamstresses.

In contrast, Mike de la Rosa was able to produce smart, sleek and sexy—but also bland—black dresses, gowns and jumpsuits for debutantes and full-tired their women's bodies. Despite having dismantled looks from the 1940s and 1980s, the designer was able to come up with current and versatile pieces that played on sheerness, silhouette and proportion.

Speaking of proportions, this quality seemed to have eluded a number of JC Rwanika's pink and white pieces, particularly an off-shoulder top that was somewhat shy for its right and awkward fit. Its flared a bit before stitch his navy-pin dresses, but the designer was obviously most comfortable doing what he does best: tailored separates for him and her.

Jo Carvajal, who made his "Metamorfosa" debut, stuck to the mind and seemed by doing several permutations of the red-carpet look in "summer-weight" fabrics such as lace, silk, organza and cotton.

In virtue of his experience and reputation as one of Sharon Cuneta's former designers, Carvajal could fashion such second-glowing numbers with his eyes closed. As such, expectations were high for him to produce something really new. Well, perhaps next time.

Ample time needed

Now that organizers plan to stage "Metamorfosa" as a yearround affair in 2007, the comedy overlooked notes should give these newcomers needed pause.

Despite its noble intentions to showcase the best of Philippine fashion, the series was a cautionary tale on the clear and present dangers posed by overexposure. It only goes to show that in an option, designers need ample time and inspiration to produce their best works.

Case in point: After his strong showing two months ago with chic, trendy all-black numbers, Randy Ortiz seemed to have followed this lame with a less cohesive collection akin to a smeared and digitized gimmick like CD gone awry.

Although the designer's wearable pieces, which made use of a cacophony of textures, materials, silhouettes and colors, were able to stand on their own, they appeared disparate when taken collectively.

Albert Bala assembled his collection way. In his denim, perhaps, to explore new territories. The usually competent designer abandoned his trademark soft, layered chiffon dresses in favor of stiff and embellished shifts made of rice silk, linen and brocade with mixed results.

Bala, who advanced his RTW dresses with corsets, cut pallettes and mixed sleeves, should also think twice before entering into men's wear. The designer's sleeveless shirts made of lace and cotton called fabrics proved less points in his collection.

Still, there were those who appointed impressive in retrospect.

Aurora, who shared the stage with Vilbrin, Joey Samson and Cary Santiago at the evening's most applauded, was one of those. He showed another are up his shoes via black-and-white printed cotton ensembles with an overlay of jazz.

In keeping with the sultry season, Aurora added hits and pieces of color to his collection, which he confined to belt loops, cutouts and jutting out details reminiscent of pieces from a figure puzzle. In lieu of documentation and less-memorable pieces, he opened by the clean, balanced look.

Victoria and Santiago

Like Aurora, Patricia, who graduated some time of his first pieces in summer, proved that natural pieces need not be stiff and boring. With plenty of inspirations, structured cotton separates can look feminine but sharp, wearable but unexpected.

Among Miranda's forte command to how channeled a bit of Marc Bouhs, design in the Modern Mouse shirt superb touches bisected dresses inspired by the tuxedo and men's checkered shirts that suit a less woman in the room around. He also fashioned playful neoprenecuffs and jute-stripped suspenders in the shape of a heart.

If Aurora dissected his work as a "happy" collection, then Mendoza's was a snappy one that popped and crackled with every passing piece.

Mendoza's, because drew inspiration from his schoolchildren days to fashion convoluted pieces that capitalized on his strengths as a master tailor and "manipulator" of fabrics. He also swayed to bursting and ad-hoc smocking in new and unconventional ways.

If majority of the collection is unwilling to go by tailored pieces into being and bulky shoulder pads still be big. On summer. In will require and shapeless dresses in black and gold as seen in the works of Lulu Tan-Gan and Ali Mahe. Champagne shades—from blush to blue—are also bound to be big as per Vivi Lazatin's forecast.

It doesn't mean, however, that soft, ladylike pieces have gone the way of the peasant skirt. Jun Escario, for one, opted to eschew flowing chiffon dresses in super and jeweled gray, which we found a bit tired and frilly.

But if soft gowns and dresses were to dominate next year's fashion scene, Inno Santiago couldn't have done a better job of advantage her look.

The Urbano designer, who used to work in the Middle East, put his training abroad to good use by teaming up with meticulously detailed and textured crops de chine numbers that made use of appliques and strips of fabric to reinvent in such a way as to mimic a dragon's scales.

Santiago's choice of nude, instead of, say, shocking pink, was an inspired one that happened on otherwise elaborate collection from going overboard. Perhaps, only when a designer plumbs through his past to look as looks ahead into the future can he produce his most inspired pieces.

E-mail the author at ann.pascual@inquirer.com.ph.

BRIAN Ocampo

JOEY Samson

ANTHONY Nocum

PAR Aurora

OJ Mabe

BHETTY Edo

ALJO Laurel

PATRICIA Antonio Diaz

FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

PHOEBE PHILO LEFT HER post as creative director of Chloe last January to spend more time with her family. Barely a year after, she's back in the fashion scene... quietly and unofficially, it seems.

The designer, who was responsible for putting Chloe back on the fashion map with her feminine little dresses and iconic handbags, is reportedly consulting with Gap. Since the clothing company moved its design office to London, it's been working with design consultants like Philo.

The clothing company also launched Roland Mouret's capsule collection of dresses early this month, but there's no news if any of Philo's designs has or ever will reach the stores.

Gap can certainly benefit from Philo's design expertise, and fashion fans will surely be thrilled to get their hands on Philo pieces with Gap prices!

Bazaar of vintage finds

THE PEACE JOE Christmas Bazaar will be held on Dec. 16-17, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., at 713 B. Gonzales St., Loyola Heights, QC.

The bazaar features one-of-a-kind vintage finds, reworked jackets, tops, hoodies, baby bags and other items.

The bazaar will also see the launching the first batch of Dracy Joe graphic tees. Limited stocks only.

There will be free snacks all-day for shoppers; also an open line from 6 p.m. onward.

E-mail jorgette.g@gmail.com or text 0927-5142078 or 0911-8078749.

CONVERSE Brand of the year

THE CONVERSE STORY

DWYANE WADE
Sportsman of the Year

Some wearables, some forgettables

Jhan Aseron, Vittorio Barba, Cary Santiago get their styles right for spring-summer next season. Other designers are simply off-season

Text by Alma T. Vergara
Photos by Jun-Goze Pascual

A PRIMO ONCE SAID THAT FASHION designers, whether wittingly or not, generally fall under two groups: those who constantly look back at the past and those who gaze unflinchingly at the future.

We were reminded of that when we recently went through a gamut of clothes from the spring-summer collections of 21 of the country's top designers at the Rockwell fair.

Billed as "Metrosense '07," the event was the culmination of months of small- or balcony shows sponsored by Smirnoff and organized by Metro magazine since October.

While those who stubbornly cling to the past tend to repeat themselves (or worse, do a keyboard version of same), one starts with and chants it as their creed, those who blissfully envision into the future face the risk of falling flat on their faces.

Although my friend was clearly in favor of the Futurists, one group, he said, ain't always necessarily better than the others. Through the years, fashion gurus as well as duds have been known to come out with regularity from both camps.

But no matter which direction they took that night, the featured "Metrosense" designers either soared to new heights like Jhan Aseron and Vittorio Barba or crashed like Tjipto Dominic and Amy Gayatin.

For a collection made of iridescent fabrics and inspired by shiny insects, Dominic's clothes appeared strangely lackluster from afar. Up close, a number of tops and bottoms were ill-fitting and betrayed unmistakable puckering.

The usually reliable Gayatin seemed to have run out of creative steam this time around. Her tattered-raw style dresses made of linocods, taffeta and jersey were no better than the ones produced by frosted-out contestants of "Project Runway."

While some got stuck in the tried and tested (and utterly predictable) like Efren Dominguez and Renee Salud, others, like Frederick Peralta, deliberately went for the "shock and awe" approach via huge, color-printed action dresses.

But perhaps in his characteristic wit, Bersita came out of the "Indagsan" virtually unscathed. In fact, a number of mannes found his clothes "interesting." Even, it only he had produced a "light" version similar to the one worn by Assunta de Rossi to appeal to a younger clientele.

If the show were about trends for

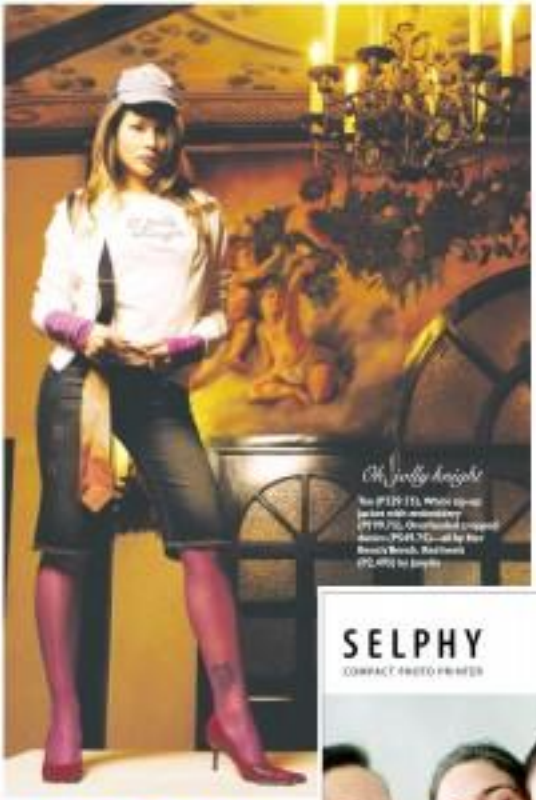
SOMO 24

JHAN Aseron

CARY Santiago

VITTORIO

LIFESTYLE



Holiday layers

Layering is a great way to dress creatively and show off your personality, while staying warm and toasty

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

FOR KNOW THAT CHRISTMAS is just around the corner when the weather turns just a wee bit colder and a bit less humid. Starting early morning or late-night hours, a jacket or a light sweater over winter is handy. Here's actually the perfect time to indulge in a bit of layering. Perfect, right?

Not only is layering a great way to dress creatively and show off your personality, it's also the perfect way to look fashionable while staying warm and toasty. Although some might say that it's not apt for Manila's tropical climate most clothing, the colder weather, there are various ways to pile on clothes without earning the ire of the fashion police. In fact, true blue fashionistas always manage to look stylishly cool on days over one item on top of another and yet another.

The good news is that for the holidays, there is offering a collection of fun, funky pieces that can be easily mixed, matched and layered. The collection runs includes cropped-to-thigh Chinese tees (bird glitz—it's fashionable, you do, there's a little something for everyone—naughty girls included!

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Of course, it helps to remember a few simple rules when layering clothes. Start off by choosing pieces that are made of lightweight materials like cotton, silk, satin, jersey or even light denims. Pieces made to stay with crotchet knits or wools that will only confuse and suffocate. Not to mention, add bulk you don't really need. Unless you're supersized this and can actually afford the extra girth, you those pieces for some winter wonderland in the Antipolo.

Next, play around with proportions. Choose items of different lengths to create points of interest and contrasts. A bolero will

SELPHY
COMPACT PHOTO PRINTER
Canon
Delighting You Always

Second girl in navy sweatshirt

Tee with pink piping (₱299.75), black zip-up jacket with hoodie (₱699.75), denim mini skirt with embroidery (₱699.75)—all by Her Stretch Mesh.

Holiday layers

From page H1

look great with a long tank top.

Color also plays an important part when layering. Bold contrasting or complementary colors are fun and funky when worn together. But if you're too timid to play around with intense-grabbing hues, try combining monochromatic colors that blend subtly but look just as effective.

You can also accentuate your fashionably layered look with up-to-the-minute accessories like belts (thick or thin, on the waist or the hips), scarves, necklaces or chokers, hairpins, stockings and the like.

Go ahead and experiment with different looks and ensembles when you start to feel that chill. In the air (and even if you don't), try a bit of layering for a whole lot of fashion. Chic!

E-mail the author at sfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Tee with piping (₱299.75) and black jacket with hoodie (₱699.75)—both by Her Stretch Mesh.

Styling: Mela de Leon
Photographs by Kai Huang
Model: Mara Lim of Look Models
Hair and Makeup: Eric Aviles of Bench Fix. SM Megamall
Shot on location at Cafe Prabal, 153 P. Guevara St., Addition Hills, San Juan

On the nice list
Tee (P299.75), olive green zip-up jacket with hoodie (P998.75)...all by Her Bench/Bench

Color also plays an important part when layering. Bold contrasting or complementary colors are fun and feisty when worn together

Santa's baby
Tee with semi-puffed sleeves (P329.75), olive-green drawstring skirt (P599.75), hooded olive green jacket with embroidery (P998.75)...all by Her Bench/Bench

On the nice list
Tee (P299.75), hot pink zip-up jacket (P998.75) and denim mini skirt with embroidery (P695.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench. Gold pumps (P1,995) by

Hot, hot eyewear

EYEWEAR, A LEADING NAME IN eyewear, unveils a new collection defined by cat's eye frames, aviators, and other quirky eye-catching pieces.

The classic Jackie O sunglasses becomes modernized with funky encrustations on the frames. Eyewear's take on the aviator, meanwhile, reveals sweet grit and glam.

These classic frames with unconventional touches come in polished browns, sleek blacks and metallics.

Eyewear is available at The Sixth Avenue, Alabang Town Center, Greenhills Colonnade, New Commonwealth, Neuland Supermall, Molave Compound, Mega Mall, Robinsons Magnolia, The Sixth Avenue, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Ugo, Riverbanks Center, SM Bacoor, SM Clark, SM Dasmariñas, SM Fairview SM Lipa, SM Lucena, SM Mall of Asia, SM Manila, SM Marilao, SM Megamall, SM Molino, SM North Edsa, SM San Lazaro, SM Sta. Mesa, SM Sta. Rosa, SM Pampanga, SM Southmall, SM City Iloilo, SM Bacolod, Sta. Lucia East, Robinsons Colombo and Robinson Pavilion.

ISABELON looks cool in Eyewear.

SEEING.gold

BROWN-EYED girl

This Christmas, choose color.

CARONIA
nail polish

LIFESTYLE

The scents of Christmas

Fruity and festive

Orange & Cinnamon and Gui Mistletoe are two enchanted Christmas ambiance collections from Fruits & Passion that create a warm, inviting and festive ambiance in every home. Your loved ones will be pleasantly nourished by the original and beautifully packaged gifts of Fruits & Passion perfumed body-care rituals, home ambiance and kitchen lifestyle products. In the Philippines, Fruits & Passion is exclusively distributed by Glorex Specialties, Inc. and is located at the Greenbelt 3, Makati Town Center and SM Mall of Asia. Visit www.fruits-passion.com

Simply irresistible

Very Irresistible classic by, the fragrance that originates from the seduction notes of star anise and crème leaves, comes with a very irresistible gift set just for this holiday season. The special Very Irresistible classic by Gift Set comes with a 75-ml Very Irresistible Classic by EDT Spray, 100-ml Body Lotion and 100-ml Body Cair. Hollywood star Liv Tyler represents the sportiveness, experience, daring and sensuality evoked by the scent. Available at Divisoria fragrance counters in leading department stores nationwide and exclusively distributed by Hunter Marketing Corp.

Gift with purchase

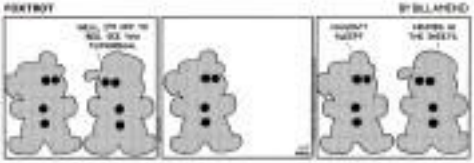
Dunhill, the ultimate fragrance for the true gentleman, offers a free weekend bag for every P3,000 worth of purchases from its store counters. Available only until supply lasts. Dunhill's new blue bottle embodies to the perfect carry-all for an overnight or day trip. Choose between Dunhill Pure and Dunhill Fresh. Dunhill Pure with its icy blue overtones opens with the zest gets. Is bit freshness of lotus leaves, enhanced by the stimulating vigor of white pepper and cardamom. Deeper into the fragrance, exotic tea tantalizes and balances the sensual effect of smoldering patchouli. Dunhill Fresh announces itself with crisp and clean overtones, blending a refined character with a lasting impression of basil, freesia and green notes. The cool aqua color gives an immediate visual impression of a relaxing refreshment. Dunhill fragrances, exclusively distributed by Hunter Marketing Corp., are sold in all leading department stores.

PRECIOUS Eau de Toilette has top notes of bergamot, melon, apple, and cinnamon. Middle notes include magnolia, water, rose, white magnoli and jasmine; while base notes are amber, raspberry and musk leave an unforgettable impression. Precious is distributed by Fuller Life Direct Selling, Inc.

ComicRelief

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2006

FOXTROT — BY BILL AMEND

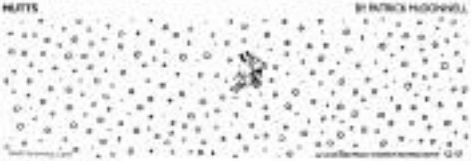


A. LIPAK — BY EDI ABRERA

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PHIL JAMORA

NUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL



LOVEBOOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHEVINGSLO

ATOMO AND WENDY — BY LYN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANALIGAN

EGO HALOHAN — BY MARK ABRERA

HIRAKOMICS — BY JOHNS TIPOO

TULOOK — BY RAFU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Large amount
6 Business joint
9 Dollar attachment
14 Bone of Pike
15 Prey in Rome
16 Come to terms
17 Pequot John Phillips portray?
19 "Hughie" setting
20 Sailing
21 Tahoe
23 Revival revival?
24 Part of U.A.E.
25 ___ the crowd
26 Jenkins Scheme
27 CCCP cadet
28 Pitcher's feat
30 Dominated pack
33 Ran
35 Warm
36 Luke again
41 Fancy footed
42 Jenkins Memorial
43 Rustic hotels
44 Insidious poetry
45 Ambulance grp.
47 Trevanian pref.
48 Shifting tide
51 Actor Mark ___ Ellingt
52 American people
54 Tyler's dad
55 Schooled
56 Former Disney honcho
57 Accomplish
58 Pequot St. Soon-Tyler heir
59 Hotel delight
60 Computer nerd
61 Wanton pest
62 Bible stepsister?
63 The name of 20
64 Eight yard

DOWN
1 Pounders
2 Curtis
3 Copy of the comics
4 "The Picture of ___ Grey"
5 Fate for transgressors
6 Drill for thank
7 Talk up
8 Randomizer Chief
9 "A misery" ear
10 Self image
11 Proud Mother's cry
12 Dues
13 Ship's ship
18 High ski
22 Former track
25 Shamrock
29 Pequot Navajo Correction comp?
31 Eurasian Lake
32 "Philadelphia" director
34 "Robin up
35 Light dreaming scene
37 Hungarian
38 Drivers
39 Actor of golf
40 Hawaiian
44 Pineapple item
45 It's west of us!
46 Word used when describing argument
50 Grandson-in-law of Zeus
53 Light bulb
54 Tiny fraction of a min.

By Leonard Williams
Paul Wayne, Sr.

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY You're friendly, loving, upbeat and definitely people-oriented. Your sensitivity to others' moods makes it easy for you to get around and your ears are good too, and this is why people love you. But it's also because you are the goodness in others. At the year ahead, you will be more aware of your responsibilities to others and to your own future. Birthdate of Adam Brody, actor; Tim Conway, comedian/actor; Sara Evans, figure skater.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Supporting others is admirable, but don't neglect your own needs and you will avoid some frustration experienced by those who get further involved than one could recommend.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be more selective about shared accommodations and entertainment today. You don't want to be dragged to an event you know, what was going on, and be left behind, now you're dealing with that! Jump on and this time.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're a social butterfly today. Your friends and colleagues like that. Don't make new acquaintances. Socialize.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have more energy than usual today, so you should be very productive. Handling important tasks takes place today. Your mood is new and creative in a lot today's or accomplishes!

LEO (July 23 to Aug 22): You have more energy than usual today, so you should be very productive. Handling important tasks takes place today. Your mood is new and creative in a lot today's or accomplishes!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Socially, you're more outgoing than usual today, so you should be very productive. Handling important tasks takes place today. Your mood is new and creative in a lot today's or accomplishes!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're a social butterfly today. You have more energy than usual today, so you should be very productive. Handling important tasks takes place today. Your mood is new and creative in a lot today's or accomplishes!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You receive a lot of shopping is likely today. You're not a spend. take. Leave your money at home, and each until tomorrow to the same person (especially if you're the one you like).

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're a stimulating and lively fascinated by everything around you. You're more than accommodation. One thing is certain: few plans will be made today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Social activities with friends and colleagues are inspiring you to your mind. Be careful you don't overdo it. You have a lot needless to do. You want to do something different and exciting.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Friends are surprising. You will enjoy the company of others. Be careful you don't overdo it. You have a lot needless to do. You want to do something different and exciting.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your imagination takes you off guard in certain unexpected ways today. You think this might be the last straw. You feel like Peter Finch in "Network": "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not gonna take it anymore!"

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

3				9				5
	8			1				7
	1				2		6	4
		4			3			
		1				3		
			5			2		
8	6		9				7	
9				6			8	
1				2				3

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	5	1	4	8	2	9	7	3
2	9	8	4	7	3	6	1	5
7	2	3	5	1	9	8	4	6
4	7	8	3	9	1	5	6	2
1	6	5	8	2	7	3	9	4
3	9	2	6	4	5	7	8	1
5	1	6	9	7	4	2	3	8
8	3	7	1	5	6	4	2	9
9	4	9	2	6	8	5	1	7

PUZZLES BY ★★★★

Bags of joy

Parisian flair

Lancel dresses up the holidays with it's hot amethyst evening bag in silk satin and lambskin. Or go casual with Lancel's (?) Premier Toit drawstring grained leather in taupe color, or (?) Card West shoulder bag of shock crocodile leather in grenade color. Lancel Paris boutiques are exclusively operated by Riviera Retail Inc. Prices are available upon request at the following branches: Lancel Paris boutique, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City (tel. 633 97 10) and Lancel Paris boutique, Glorietta 4, Makati City (tel 166 ?).

Rome in your bag

It's your lucky day! Here's your chance to own one of these limited-edition handbags for the glamorous on your list. Only 2500 are being produced, each with a special plate inscribed to signed, numbered and inscribed to commemorate the re-opening of the Bottega Veneta Rome boutique.

Made of luxuriously soft goatskin (shearer) handcrafted in the house's signature intrecciato style, its luminous brass hue is the result of pure natural pigments and special hand-finishing processes that also render the leather exceedingly soft.

The Rome will be introduced during the boutique's opening celebrations on early 2007. For a limited time, it will be available only at that boutique.

Bottega Veneta shoes, handbags and leather accessories, available at Greenbelt 4, Makati City, is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Mimis Specialists, Inc. Call ?5?8?93.

Which bag are you?

Your bag is an extension of your personality. Feeling adventurous? Then grab a backpack. Stand by bifolds, totes and totems, a backpack is sometimes supportedly lightweight metal frames. For the frayed fashionista, check out Jane and and The Bandit Cave.

A shoulder bag is commonly used by women for holding money, lotion, cosmetics, and other personal items. Bag-aholics usually have one shoulder bags from Kipling, Jon Peoples and Guatemalteens.

Veg off with a positive bag. With long straps worn across the body, a crossbody bag from Carmelo, La Casa and Hangren give you a hip, on the go image.

If you're the serious, business-like type, go for a laptop bag with compartments for computer, documents, three and even gym clothes. When it comes to elegant laptop bags, Hidrimon and Samsonite are the most widely loved brands.

If you're the active kind, look for pet with a tote bag, an open top bag with straps and handles that provide easy stuffing of items from shopping. If the going environmental, try out a eco tote bag from Redgreen and Jon Peoples.

Match your athletic persona with a stylish duffel bag from Guatemala, Jon Peoples and Redgreen.

All stores carries the widest range of fashionable and quality bags. Stores are located at Ayala Center Cebu: The Block at SM City North Edsa, SM City Manila, SM Southmall, SM City Muntinlupa, SM City Sucat, SM City Pampanga, SM City Cagayan de Oro, Robinsons Galleria and Robinsons Place Manila.

Bright and merry

FOR THE STYLE-SAVVY Combis is the newest hotspot for Manila fashionistas. The brand has everything for the style savvy, from glittery designer gowns to trendy tops and bottoms and eye-catching accessories all imported from the international fashion circuit. Combis is exclusively available at Gateway Mall at the Araneta Center. Visit www.araneta.com.ph.

A DRAMATIC mood sets in this season as French Connection offers fluid summer tops in sleek color. Metallics are used in innovative ways here is revealed through knitwear for vintage charm. A beautiful statement cowl is glamorous enough on pass for basic contrast. Shoes likewise mirror this mood. FCUK is exclusively available at Rustan's Makati and Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

LIME sleeveless organza dress with floral and bow belt accents

TWO TONED purple and lilac spaghetti-strapped dress with floral appliques

LITTLE GIRLS DRESSED UP FOR THE holidays is SM

They're definitely in a celebratory mood as they dazzle in rich jewel tones—ruby red, emerald green, amethyst purple, yellow topaz. There's nothing tiny about this collection—colors glow, and organza and silk reign.

Shapes are full and feminine with bubble skirts giving a fresh look to traditional dresses. Details—ruffles, flowing bow belts, floral appliques and headwork...are subtle yet youthfully elegant to bring on the holiday spirit.

The collection is available in the children's wear department of all SM stores.

FUCHSIA spaghetti-strapped bubble dress with bow

Crisp casual chic

CLEAN, CRISP-CUT, AND CHIP PRICED make up the Holiday Collection fashion show with which Marks & Spencer, the largest clothing retailer and a multibillion pound food retailer in the UK, recently opened its 12th store in the Philippines at the Old Mall of Asia.

The new store features the exclusive ranges of women's and men's fashion, accessories and lingerie, as well as food. It offers exclusive brands such as Blue Harbor Vintage, Blue Harbor Classic, Autograph, and renowned UK exclusive menswear designers such as Jeffrey Rose, Nigel Hall and Timothy Everest.

Standouts in the collection are Autograph suit jackets matched with Autograph long sleeved formal shirt, scarves and ties; Per Una beaded sweet dress, a Sequin bodycon top in black and red; Per Una wrinkle bolero, Jewel Crop pants in black, three-fourths sleeve V-neck in various colors, and Magic Chino bootleg jeans in black.

Marks & Spencer also offers great Christmas packages in its beauty section. Gift sets for women are available in scents of magnolia, rose and lavender, while fragrances carries the fusion of gardenia and jasmine scents.

Gift sets for men are filled with favorite selections from Iris, Harvard, Autograph and Woodgate. The food and wine gift sets have delectable choices of wine, chocolates, pasta sauces and cookies, among many others.

Marks & Spencer stores are located at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 1, Greenbelt 3, Alabang Town Center, Power Plant Mall, SM Megamall, Gateway Mall, SM North Edsa, SM Megacenter, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, Ayala Cebu and Old Mall of Asia.

M&S & Spencer Sequin Satin color top, P1,795; plain PVC cropped pants, P1,990

3/4 sleeve shrug top, P1,995; Sport Suit trousers, P1,595

LOMI pleated coat, P3,950; 3/4 stitch detail V-neck shirt, P1,795; wide-cuff poly blending trousers, P1,595

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Estrella C. Valenciano

Pinay performer a hit in off-Broadway show

...and Mel Gibson takes the hot seat, gingerly

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Andrew T. Nguyen

MARIE-FRANCE ARCILLA

Kyle Gass stars as "KG" and Jack Black plays "JB" in New Line Cinema's musical comedy, Tenacious D in The Pick of Destiny

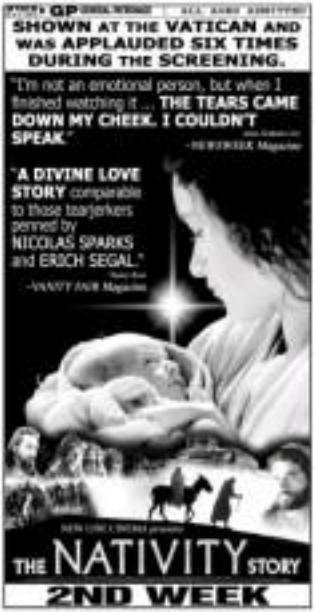
Pinay performer a hit in off-Broadway show

Front page 00

writes. I started to do it. I wrote all the music in there. It was a chance to tell the true story of my band," Sumagaysay said. "It's added so much heights. "I also had to add a lot of ties to make it more exciting."

"I just loved doing the movie," continued the star of "Under Libre." "It was because of my band that I have a career at all. It's always just sort of seeing how far can we go. Would people enjoy at in a major motion picture? I hope so because I'd like to do another one." The film's soundtrack CD, released by Sony BMG Music Entertainment, is a kick, featuring 13 new songs from The D like "Tikatayo," "Break in City (Storm the Gate)" and "Backstabber (The Final Showdown)."

Also included in the mark Vitaro Q of "Emotion U," a repertoire testimony of "Im I which is one shy about Ingredients and hills itself in Fischer Building account Heavy Metal Band in the World. Jo-



Bundle of nerves

Mel Gibson has always been restless at interviews.

In the actor-director's first major press conference since his arrest last July for speeding and drunk driving—which he reportedly screamed anti-Jewish slurs...he seemed more tense and uncomfortable than ever.

He picked up a bottled paper napkin in front of him, turned it both on the table and picked it up again.

Toward the end of the interview, in discussing his "Apocalypto," which continues to make him a controversial figure because of the violent content, Mel had rolled and folded the paper napkin so many times that it had become a tiny ball of paper.

When the war asked how he was, Mel replied, "I'm good, I'm good." At the same time, he suddenly lifted his chair backward in an apparent slip, throwing how unsure he was. He was fashionably dressed in suit and tie, his uniform these days as he made the rounds of media appearances. Looking like he has gained weight, Mel has settled into middle age (50 last January).

He does not state acting—he prefers directing now V-an in front of the camera through somebody else," said the man who is a critic, handsome presence in such movies

...ICON. A bundle of nerves.

...s "Mad Max" series and "The ...of Living Dangerously," partly ...ed in the Philippines. ...r Oscar and Golden Globe ...d-winning director for "Scene ..." is a brilliant filmmaker but ...e don't his unrestrained pro... to show gore and violence. ...is reviewers wrote that "Specu..." "set in the Mayan civilization, ...d how horrific-best action-ad... are to come out of Hollywood ...ears—if only Mel knew when ...op shooting squirting blood, ...g heads, impalement, bind... ...g ... the list goes on. Instead ...e asserted that Gibson's ...n "The Passion of the Christ," ...ervasive movie which also ignit... ...d of controversy but eventual... ...ranks his of society all over the ...d made him a very rich ...wrote like Eddie Izzard.

...l jokes

...ld find something deep or ...ingly juvenile in his new ...e, you are welcome to it, the ...York-born, Australia-raised ...ealer said essentially. "Your try ...make them so that everyone ...something from it," he stated ...ubtedly. The movie topped the ...n office war last weekend.

...d to relieve his tension during ...ress tour, Mel removed to old ..., which shows a lot of height ...which some found inappropri... ...me joke involved the "f" ...). In one press he quipped, in ...nse to an innocuous question ...as something that we don't ...about you!"): "Perhaps you've ...ard about my incendiary ...y christ. I was circumcised in ...ago."

...p in mind that imagery from ...s interest below existed be... ...n, and he smiled and ...ned, but the man speaking ...was a bundle of nerves.

...about the film in Mexico, you ...y know) and you had an "inci... ." Please are you sure after ...g through all this? ...s good. I'm good. "Yes I know, at ...ared to. I'm going to ...which is just a little all season ...r daughter). Life is a process ...arning about yourself, others, ...many things that perhaps you ...t contemplated before. We're ...of these, nineteen, three. That's ...e title film is about—the four... ...e leaves...every spiders crawl. ...e that guy at one point. I feel ...on the journey.

...ason in Mexico for a long ...on my account that you know ...e validate rich in proteins. Otto ...son is, "A child until a drunk ...to tell the truth." What do ...think of that?

...ely funny. A child is ...rently killed. A child is ...rently well informed. A drunk is ...of his right mind. Each insane, ...not operating in the right ... You are literally affecting ...brain cells with that stuff.

...ason honored by The Little ...ews Association for this film: ...the Los Angeles Times wrote ...the association made a bad ...ion in giving you its Outst... ...y Visionary Award. What ...about that?

...her critical piece, titled "How ...y Think," pointed but that A. ...dashed: "It's one thing to ac... ...ologize a work's artistic and ...ual merits and quite another ...condone Gibson a 'visionary' ...ually it's a time when the in... ...culture industry has concluded ...ion that virulent racism is in... ...ve clothes away.")

...don't read anything. It's all a ...k of benefit anyway so why ...it exist? Why should I have ...mind stirred by it?

...u could have a new begin... ...what would you do?

...got a new baby daughter). I ...know a new beginning. It's ...ly winter a new beginning. ...ly season to know what to ...is now and I'll be back about 10 ...and see if they could vent ...Everybody wants that to ...ve all make mistakes.

...ason's finished ...ward the cinematic ...ends. 2006 by Salon.com.

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SHOW TIME

Promo Mechanics

1. Consumer buys specially marked packs of M&M's Chocolate Milk, Peanut, Crispy, or Minis with an M&M's Jazz Up Your Christmas 2 shown from any participating establishments. Each shown will have a unique alphanumeric raffle code printed on it.
2. To join the promo, just text MMJAZZ (RAFFLE CODE NAME/ADDRESS/AGE) to 29767 for Globe, Touch Mobile, Sun Cellular, Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk 'n Text Subscribers. P5.00 will be charged per text message sent to Globe, Touch Mobile, Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk 'n Text subscribers. P5.00 will be charged for Sun Cellular subscribers.
   Example: MMJAZZ A 12/Lucien Ryan/24 Pasay St. Ateneo City/30
   For succeeding entries, just type MMJAZZ (Raffle Code)
   Example: MMJAZZ MSTR
3. M&M's® packs with the Jazz Up Your Christmas 2 stickers must be kept and shall be presented for verification purposes in order to claim the prize.
4. Promo will run from November 1 – December 31, 2006.
5. Prizes include: 3 units Honda Jazz 1.3 Automatic Transmission, 10 units Sony Ericsson W580i Mobile Phone and 30 units Apple iPod Nano 4 GB.
6. Draws will be held on: November 22, December 6, December 13 and December 20. Grand draw will be on January 15, 2007.
7. All entries are cumulative. Non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws. The more entries sent, the more chances of winning.
8. Cut-off dates for entries is every Sunday 11:59pm prior to the draw date. For the Grand Draw, cut-off will be on December 31, 2006, 11:59pm.
9. Winners will be notified by a Globe/Sun Cellular official in the presence of a representative from SFEC, Metrobank Callsentre and Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
10. Winners will receive a call with accompanying instructions on how to claim their prize. They must be prepared to surrender the M&M's chocolate wrapper with the winning raffle code. Unopened, plain and in tampered cartons, as well as wrappers with no promo stickers and nice name will be disqualified and declared invalid.
11. Verification procedures will be adhered to ensure validity and authenticity of the promo winner and wrapper. Representatives from SFEC and Master Foods Philippines Inc. will conduct the verification procedures.
12. Raffled winners will then be eligible to claim their prize.
13. Winners will be announced in 2 major newspapers after the grand draw.
14. Prizes are non-transferable and not convertible to cash.
15. All prizes are tax paid.
16. Children under 12 years old are not eligible to join the promo.
17. Employees of Master Foods Philippines Inc. or their agencies, suppliers, partners and sponsors, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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LIVING Stars

Liza Flores & Velarde

HOME BODY

THE ACTOR/DIRECTOR is an avid musician. He also painted the art work in the background.

Playtime in Bulacan

This vacation home allows Cesar Montano's family to go nature-tripping on weekends

By Rocel Sin Diego Jr.
Photos by Ryan Lim

CESAR MONTANO'S COUNtry home somewhere in Bulacan allows the actor/ young kids Angelina, Samantha and Francesca to experience "real life," away from the hustle and bustle of show biz.

"Here, they're close to nature. They see trees, plants and animals grow. I encourage them to help in watering plants," Cesar says.

The 2.5-hectare property is strewn with fruit trees like lanzones, avocado, santol, atis, guava, coconut, guyabano, jackfruit and durian and vegetables like eggplants, okra, pechay and tomatoes.

Yes, it's sure big fruit and veggie hotel for the health buff, who's married to Sunshine Cruz. (he modestly lit us here who's his co-star in the Metro Manila Film Festival entry "Liguliguli").

"When, I jog, point, swim and play with the kids," the actor says. "Angelina and Samantha are now addicted to swimming."

The gentleman farmer is also into ringing and possibly raising.

"I used to have only big-talent chickens from them, but now I also have native chickens. I've gone nationalistic," he jokes.

At milk some of his friend's produce in nearby restaurants, but they also consume some at home. Cesar says, "I always remind my staff: Why do you have to buy okra in the market when we have plenty in our own backyard?"

CESAR and daughters Angelina and Francesca pose by the jogging path that runs across the 2.5-hectare property

PLAYTIME >>

ERIK SANTOS

My favorite nook is my bedroom, where I relax when I'm free from work. I just spend the entire day watching TV and movies on DVD. I also listen to music and play computer games. This room reflects my personality. You can find different shades of blue in it—light blue picture frames, navy blue Roman blinds, sky blue bed covers and an abstract painting entitled "Ocean Blue." Since I have no large windows, I put up dark blinds to block sunlight. Even if it's sunny day, it's still dim, cozy and cool in my room. I also like the garden at the back of our house.

Rapunzel Sian Dhogo Jr.

FAVORITE NOOKS

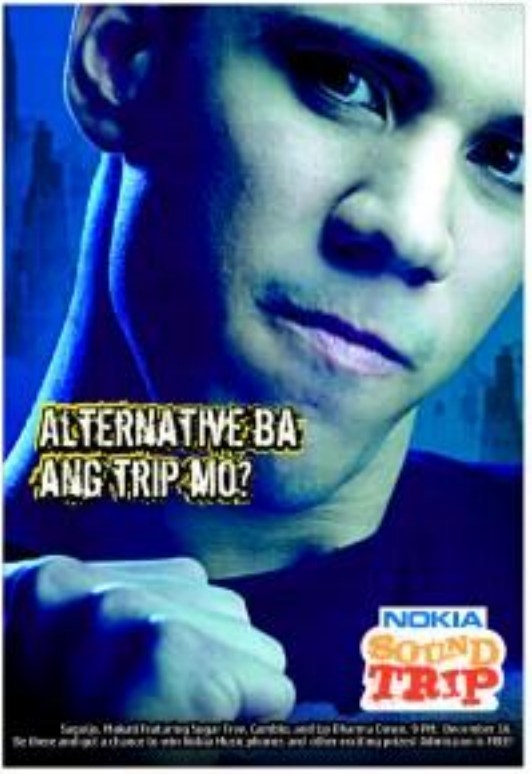
The Real Causes of WOMEN'S HAIRLOSS

Hair can enhance or ruin a woman's appearance. Deemed her "crowning glory," thick, healthy, lush strands that frame a woman's face can emphasize her beauty and youth. On the contrary, hair loss can do the exact opposite. It can make a woman appear older and less attractive, which can cause low self-esteem, depression and isolation.

There are various triggers of women's baldness. Hormonal changes by far have the biggest impact since they stimulate hair growth and cause the actual hairloss. Female Pattern Baldness (or Androgenetic alopecia) is a reaction to male hormones in the body. It is an inherited sensitivity to the effects of male hormones (androgens) on scalp hair follicles.

Stress can also be a contributing factor to women's hairloss. This leads to a severe tension in the scalp, affecting the supply of essential nutrition required for the healthy growth of hair. Hair damage from the use of hair styling treatments and other chemicals also affects the hair condition, making the hair strands weak and causing them to break.

Svenson utilizes various treatments to help women avoid hairloss from occurring. In the case of hairloss that has already started, Svenson also has solutions to prevent it from progressing to more advanced hairloss. With Svenson, women not only get their hair back, they also look younger and better. Call Svenson today at 892-HAIR (8247) for a free consultation.



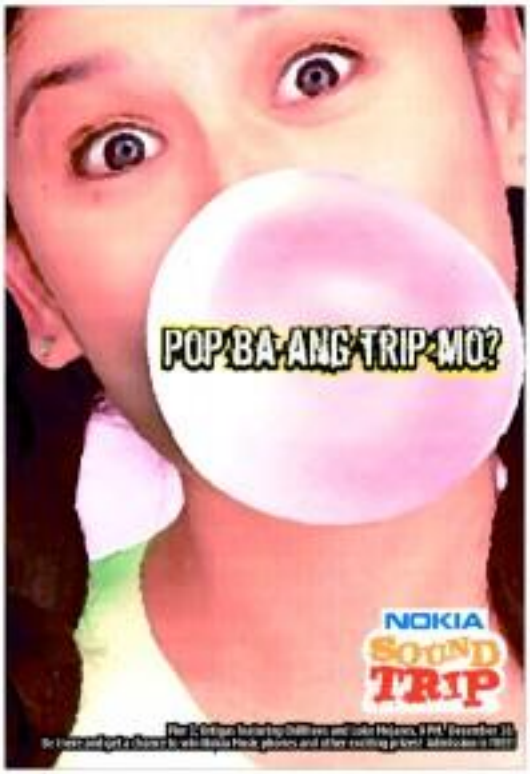
DID YOU KNOW...

BACHELOR JAMIE FOXX HAS A DAUGHTER, CORINNE. HE BROUGHT her to the premiere of "Dreamgirls" at the Wilshire theater in Beverly Hills on Monday. That's Corinne with her dad and Beyonce, at far right. And Chow Yun-Fat is married. He brought his wife, Jasmine Tse, right, to the "Curse of the Golden Flower" Singapore premiere Tuesday.

DINGDONG DANTES

TAIL TALES

My Siberian Husky's name is Stokes. I named him after my favorite character, Aragorn, from "Lord of the Rings." I got it last summer. He was given to me by Regine Velasquez. He's big now, and he loves to swim. Enjoy size, realized. He's almost a year old. When I leave for work, I say good bye to him. When I get back, I greet him, too. But when I'm staying at home, I'm with him the whole time. I believe our bond can be better if I can give him more of my time, but I make it a point to go to him before going to bed. Stokes is my first pet. It's not easy. I ask for assistance in cleaning him up and feeding him, especially when I'm not home. I make it a point that he eats on time. I give him attention, which is the number one thing. Oliver M. Palomaria



CHERRY PIE PICACHE

Lam currently reading two books: Jane Nesbit's memoir "My Life So Far" and Molly Lamb's "This Much I Know is True." Jane's book was a gift from Vivi (aka Godmpa), who, phonetic nerd or "Mumbo," (formerly I weren't fascinated with the life stories of celebrities, but when Tina Fey told me about it, I became interested in Jane's journey of healing. The award is scored as a selection from Oprah's Book Club and tells the story of twin brothers. I prefer self help and inspirational books, like Pearl Cyclist's "The Artdentist" and Mitch Albom's "Tuesdays with Morrie," as well as the romance novels of Nicholas Spark. Big text from Page A1

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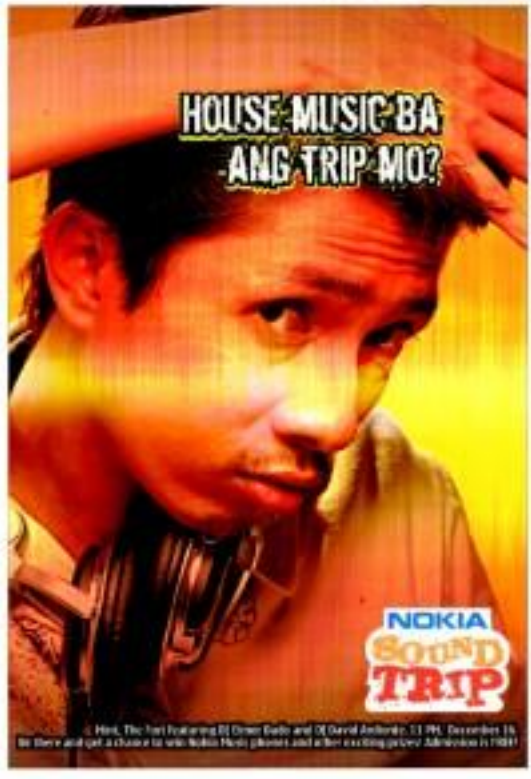

Playtime in Bulacan

From page 01

Rizal influence

The house architecture is a mix of Asian and Western influences, with most of the century European bungalows having the jogging path.

"It must be the Jose Rizal influence," he recalls. Gene played the national hero in the 1998 movie, Gen. Rizal."

Country living has a positive effect on the kids, he observes—especially on their generation like child Angelito, who recently co-starred with Gene in a Get Set Share TV commercial.

"I want my kids to realize that not everything can be bought from the grocery store—that we can grow our own food," he points out. "The place is full of life."

PLAYTIME/14

HE KNOWS his way around the kitchen and leverages his staff to avail of the produce in their backyard.

THE POND is teeming with tilapia fish. It's also used as a garden for the Chua-Lee Kiam household's fishless but fabulous meals.

IN THE past, he only took care of hefty kabir-chickens from Israel. "But there was also a demand for cockers or fighting chickens."

THE COUNTRY home has all the modern accoutrements of city living. "It's very relaxing here."

THE KIDS, shown here taking in the terrace with dad, rapists Bullecer with grandma, he says. "Here, they can run around freely, unlike in our city home where they are often cooped in the house."

THE TWO kids have become "addicted" to swimming, Chua says.

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NOW SHOWING

JUDY Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo

What's cooking?

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ACTRESS JUDY ANN SANTOS, WITH beau Ryan Agoncillo and friend Beth Tamayo, announced "Judy Ann's" cake and pastry section in her new Cafe Constantia on two buffet nights.

"We auctioned eight cakes, ten cocoa-banana breads and five muffin varieties. Bidding for the cakes started at P1,000; for the muffins [a box of 12], P500," Judy recalls.

On the first night, she told a New York cheesecake worth P4,200. On the second auction, a Tahitian cake, made from pure chocolate sabayo, went for a record P15,000.

"The minimum rule was, which was P500, came with a big choco chip cookie for free," she explains.

At home, there were also performances from rock artists Margot Aguilar, Radha Coudrado and, naturally, Cookie Chua.

Judy supports two foundations: Touch a Heart (for kids and the elderly) and Tarlac and Share (for tarlac refugees), according to manager Abby Contreo.

The session, a food eatery was clearly a labor of love.

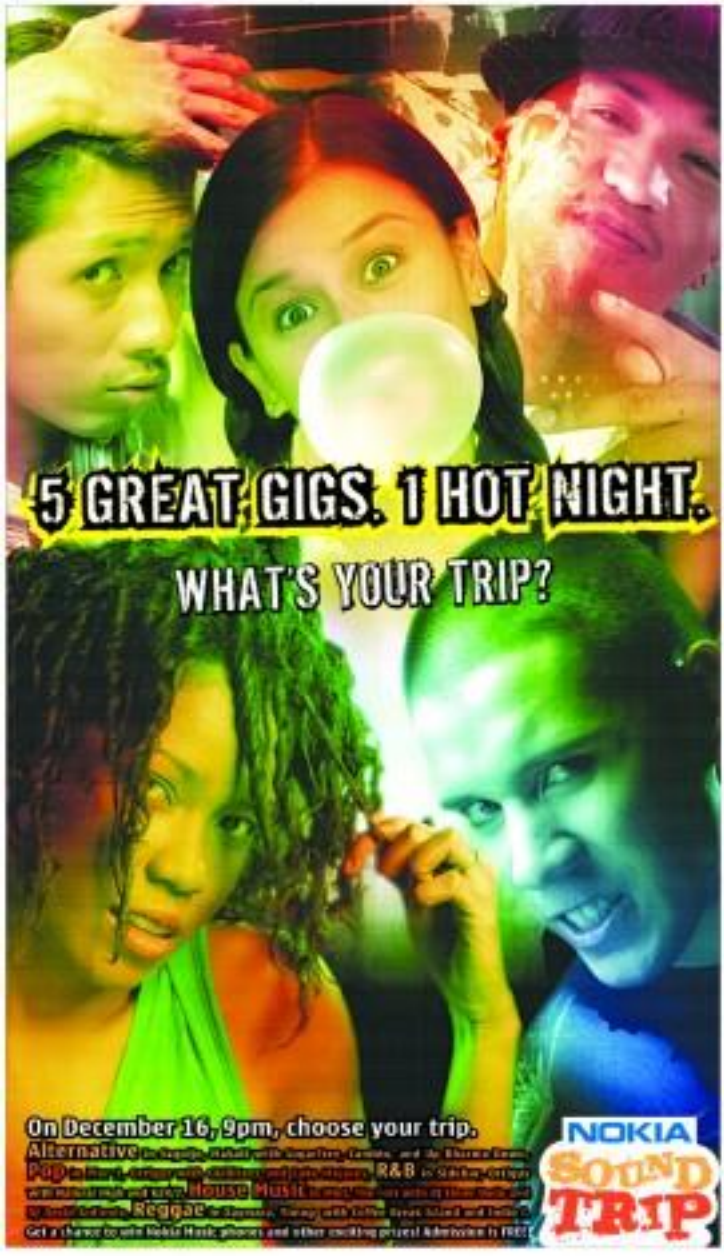
Aided by family and friends, she usually starts baking at 8 a.m.the morning and a few minutes before the big event.

It can be nerve-wracking.

"But seeing the smiles of those who bought the cakes makes it all worthwhile. They are always surprised when I tell them that I baked the cakes myself," she quips.

Judy graduated from the Center for Asian Culinary Studies, under chef Gene Gonzales of Cafe Ysabel Greenhills, last Wednesday.

PARTY! PARTY!



'Dreamgirls' LA premiere

BEYONCE Knowles

PAULA Abdul

ANNA Nicole Smith

KHEIR McDowell